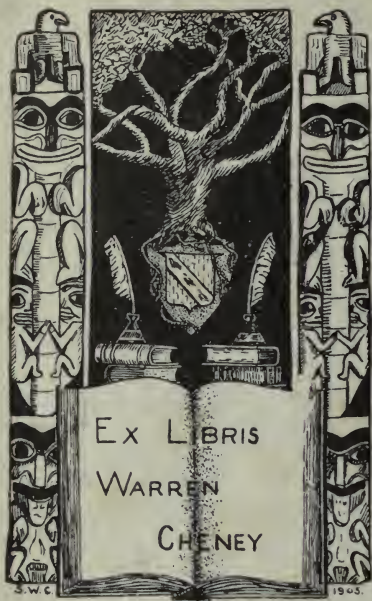
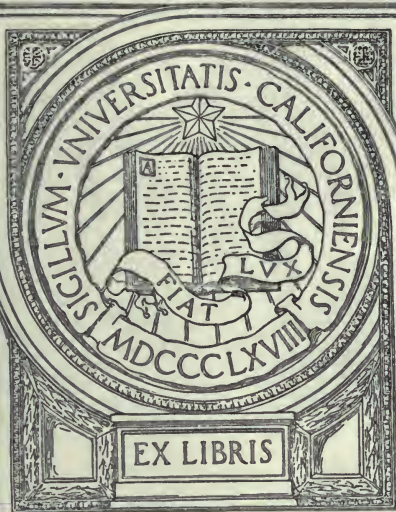
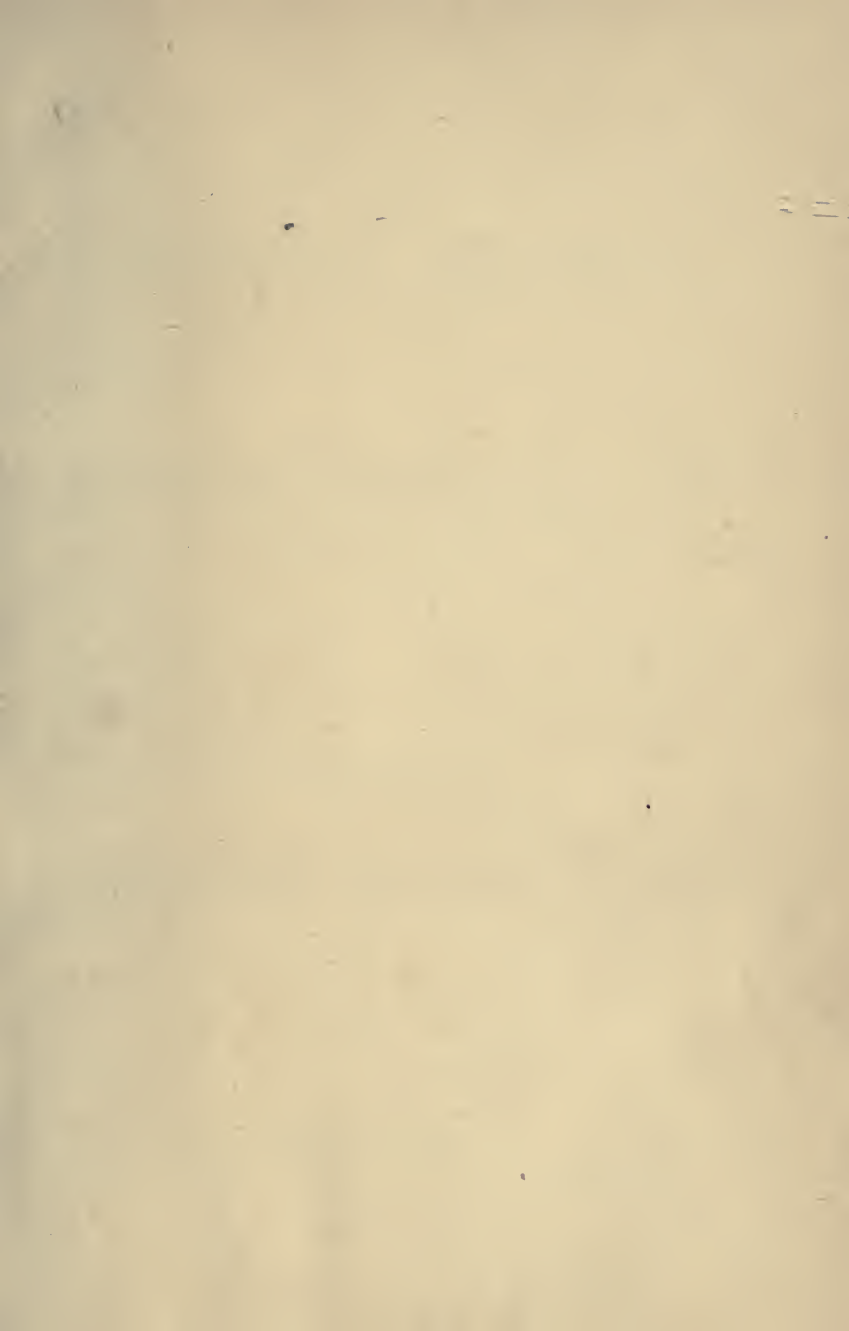




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A REASONABLE CHRISTIANITY

BY LAURENTINE HAMILTON

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

"Ever the words of God resound;
But the porches of man's ear
Seldom, in this low life's round,
Are unsealed, that he may hear."
—EMERSON.

SAN FRANCISCO

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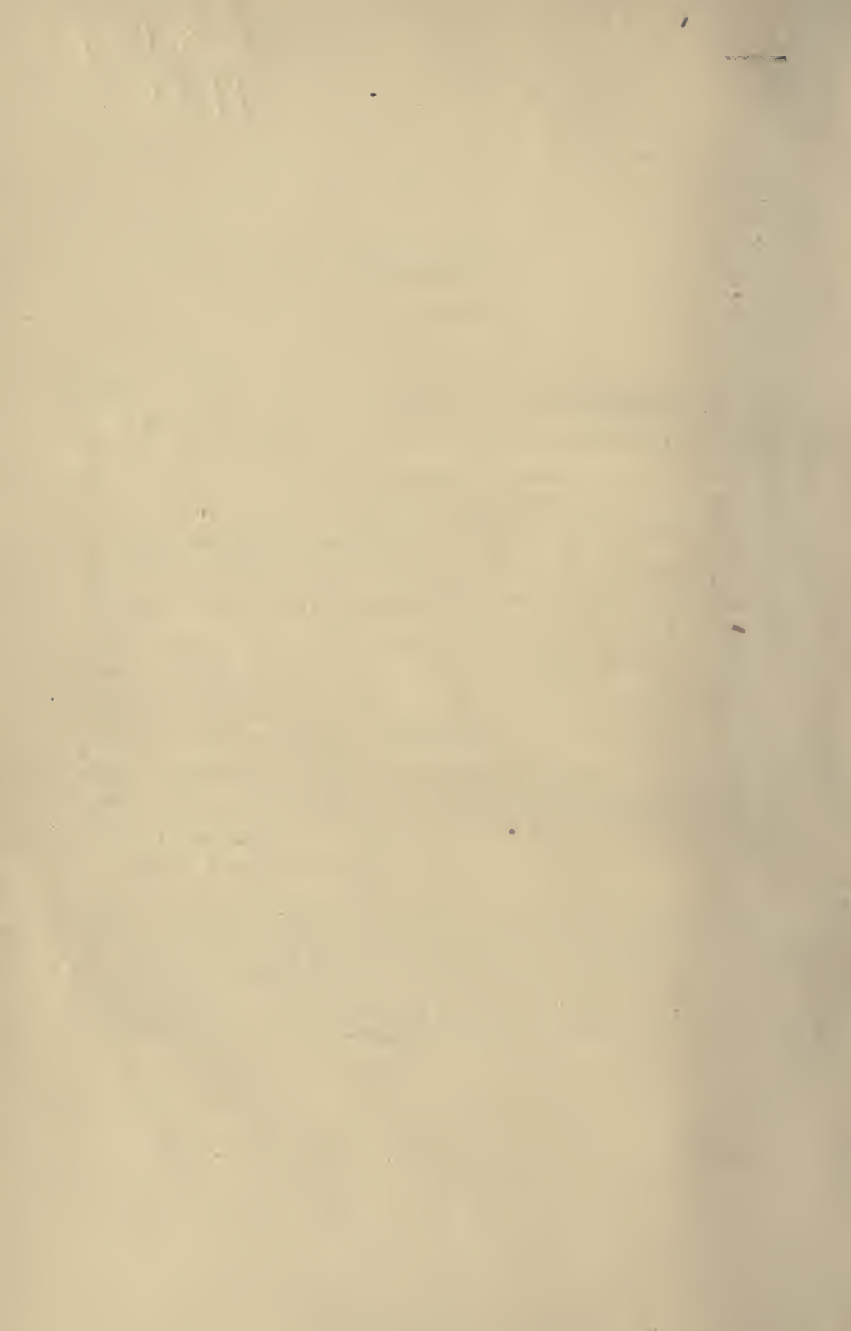
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Contents.

	PAGE
Introduction.....	5
I. The Return to Faith.....	13
II. The Word of God Unbound.....	30
III. Law in the Kingdom of God.....	52
IV. A Progressive Creation the Type of a Progressive Revelation.....	66
V. The Human Nature of Jesus.....	83
VI. The Divinity of Jesus.....	102
VII. The New Birth.....	115
VIII. The Atonement.....	128
IX. Repentance and Forgiveness.....	141
X. The Holy Spirit.....	154
XI. The Resurrection.....	169
XII. The Judgment Day.....	182
XIII. The Real Point at Issue between Sacred and Secular Science.....	197
XIV. Physical Man the Final Term of Material Evolution.....	228
Appendix A.—Is the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus a Fundamental Article of the Christian Faith?.....	256
Appendix B.—Cavour's Prophecy.—Can Christianity become the Universal Religion?.....	265



Introduction.

“Pele’s hair,” says the Kanaka, as he sees the smoke and flame streaming from the great chimney of Kilauea. “An eruption of lava,” says the scientific materialist; and curls the lip at the poor superstition which imagines a God in the wonder. “As if we did not know how it all comes to pass—chemical forces generated in the subterranean laboratory of the earth belch forth these rock-flames; ‘Pele’s hair,’ indeed!” Which is the nearer right? Is there no God in the case? If the atom originated the forces that lift and shake that feathery plume of rock, then the materialist has the question. If those forces came forth from a personal Will, immediate or remote, then the Kanaka is nearer the right in both fact and feeling. This raises at once the vital question of religion: Is there a Personal God? The materialist says no. Jesus of Nazareth *assumes* the affirmative, nowhere attempting its demonstration. The agnostic (whose philosophy is just now the fashion) says we can know nothing positive of an infinite Personality. Confused with this Babel of voices, distressed with conscious vagueness in the idea of God, not yet wise enough to see that our limited powers must be content with sufficient evidence *that* God is, while they can know but in part, and very limited part, *what* He is, many a thoughtful mind wavers between conflict-

ing opinions, and gets neither comfort nor strength for right living, from any faith. The need is of some idea of God that puts the mind in the right practical attitude toward Him. The Kanaka *feels* his relation to a personal God, and reasons no further. The materialist speculates himself out of all sense of such relation, and feels only the properties of matter in the cold touch of nature. His only *felt* relation to Heaven is gravitation and starlight. The Kanaka asks help of God. The materialist seeks to adjust himself to impersonal law and inexorable force. But the Kanaka looks for special interventions of the Deity which never come. He imagines that God will turn aside from the course of nature to smite him with a thunderbolt if he sins, or send supernatural *poe* in answer to his prayer, or wait on his material wants in like ways. This is a false expectation. Its influence is bad. It makes him a slave to fear, or leads to disappointment, discontent, instability, and quarrel with nature and God. Growing reason corrects the superstition. On the other hand, the materialist, looking upon nature as *Spiritless* and impersonal, feels no appeal from it, as the voice of God, to conscience, aspiration, hope or love ; he misses the highest influences that have made history heroic, and souls grand. A sense of dependence and heart-relations teaches the world better.

We want a faith that corrects the errors of each and combines the good of both—a faith that purifies by a sense of personal responsibility to God, and warms with personal trust and love, and still holds solidly to the order of nature. Until we get such a faith, the alternative will be Kanaka piety, or materialistic indifference and pessimism. There is a good deal of the former in

the Christian Church of to-day; perhaps an equal amount of the latter in the circles of science.

The discussions of this book* aim to aid, as far as they may, the bringing in of the needed faith. They interpret Jesus and his Word, not as a miracle or afterthought of God, thrust into the order of the world, but as the summit and crown of evolution, an integral and inseparable part of the whole, the fullness of the divine manifestation, which was unfolding, progressively, from the first globing of the star-mist, or whatever element it was, that formed our earth. It is my conviction that the course of moral and spiritual evolution that places Jesus at the head of the human race, can be inductively traced, and with as much clearness, for minds capable of discerning that kind of evidence, as that course of physical evolution which places man at the head of the animal kingdom. In this may we not yet find a truly scientific basis for the Christian faith—one that will not only command the respect, but compel the assent of the scientific and philosophic mind?† It may be a shock to some deep-rooted prejudices; it may call for the reconstruction of dogmatic conceptions which have been sup-

* These discussions, save the Appendix and last two articles, were revised carefully from sermons delivered in the pulpit of the Independent Church, Oakland, and first printed in a local paper, issued only for the society of that Church. Some local references are left to stand in them because I have believed that they illustrate conditions of society that are nearly universal. The subjects follow each other in an order that aims at natural succession and something more of unity and completeness than would be possible in a volume of miscellaneous discourses.

I owe grateful acknowledgments to Mr. A. T. Dewey, senior member of the firm that publishes the book, for the generous liberality which offered to stereotype and preserve the weekly discussions in this more permanent form.

† The last two articles of this book are added in the hope that they will serve to make more clear the rational and scientific basis of my interpretation of Christianity. I am aware that they are insufficient, and hope, with larger opportunity of time and study, to give a fuller statement of the facts and laws that form that basis.

posed to involve the very essence of Christianity ; but, as has often happened before, it will soon be seen that it destroys only that which was becoming an obstacle to the progress of faith.

Science has set aside the idea of specific acts of the Creator in shaping the forms of vegetable and animal life. The mind takes a new bent from this fact. The corollary is not yet accepted, but it is easy to see whither the course of thought tends. It will not rest until it has set aside the idea of special "Divine Interpositions," "Governmental Expedients," "Schemes of Salvation," and all solemn fictions of that sort, in God's ruling of the world. Nature knows nothing of such *ex post facto* laws. Her methods are God's methods. Faith must learn to see God where Science sees him, if at all, in nature, not in eccentric power breaking now and then across her laws, as a disturber of her order. "Not a sparrow falls to the ground without your Father," says Jesus. Gravitation is his act. He is in every force of nature. The movement of these forces is the energy of his will. One question here comprehends all particular questions : Are we to think of God as putting forth special volitions ? (See pp. 205-210). If he does not in creating, does he in ruling ? The conception of special Divine acts will not bear examination. It will be found an absurdity to reason, and practically mischievous. Can we think of the Infinite as putting forth more energy or action at one moment than at another ? And whence spring the darkest doubts of God's goodness, and the worst tempers of rebellion against his providence ? Is it not from these Kanaka expectations of his special interpositions, awakened only to be disappointed ? If that be his way, why does he not come

at our cry? We cannot help but ask. He does not come. We doubt his existence, or we charge him with heartlessness and cruelty.

But, I am asked, "If God answers not by special act, why pray?" Strange question! Is God's action to be counted for naught because it is uniform? The atmosphere does not press into the lungs by special volition; why breathe? Because *your act* is necessary. God is the atmosphere of spiritual life in which you live, and move, and have your being; prayer inhales that life. Your field puts forth no special volition to give you a harvest; why till the soil? Because, though the field, in its richness, is the perpetual offer of a harvest, you must accept. Plowing and sowing is your act of acceptance. God, the ever-present Spirit, is the perpetual offer of Himself to the soul. Prayer accepts. And, to the praying soul God gives Himself forever and ever. This is all that any special act could do.

"Yes, in spiritual influence and fellowship," it will be said; "but does he never bestow, are we never to ask, special temporal favors?" At two crises in the life of Jesus, it is recorded that angels came and ministered unto him; and Jesus himself asked on one occasion, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" We at once ask here, if it be God's way to come Himself in special assistance, why send the angels? Could they do better than the Omnipotent? Yet, in these very examples, it grows plain how answers to prayer, even in special gifts, may come, without supposing that the Infinite Will has first been moved to some new act. They affirm the truth of *Mediatorial Ministration*. (See pp.

222-225). All races of men have believed in "ministering spirits." Reason cannot pronounce the belief a superstition unless it denies spiritual existence outright. What "legions," wiser in God's will than we, may watch over human weakness and want, we know not. We may well speak with reserve here. The laws and limits of such aid are to us undefined. Humility may hope, but selfishness may not presume on indulgence. Let need ask; then let the heart be content with what is given.

Thinking of God as never putting forth special acts, I am aware, will seem to many, at first, as removing Him far away from human need, and the heart's trust and love. On the contrary, I am wholly persuaded that, when this way of thinking of Him shall become the habit of faith (as in a more reflecting religion it surely will), the result will be just the opposite. Man will learn to look for God, not into the sky, but—where only He can be found—into himself. He will emphasize that central truth of Jesus's teaching, the Holy Spirit *abiding in* the disciple forever. He will never think of God as *away*. If, in the material world, not the lightest effect of gravitation, not a sparrow's fall, is without Him, can there be a twinge of conscience or a throb of love in the soul without Him? The same view will also banish effectually the fatal delusion that the natural penalty of sin will be set aside by the arbitrary act of God's pardon—a delusion which has made religious teachings prolific of immorality. It will give at once warmth to faith, and moral health to character.

Corresponding with the view of Christianity as the highest evolution of the religious idea, the Bible is re-

garded in the following pages as the history of that evolution, or, at least, containing the chief materials for that history. It is the story of the "Chosen Race," divinely endowed and inspired to see and tell the world man's relation to spiritual realities; becoming the Priesthood of humanity for reasons which we can no more trace than we can tell why John Milton was a poet and John Locke a metaphysician, or why Greece became the teacher of the world in art, and Rome in law. Springing from the darkness of barbarism, with its crude notions of God, we can see the dawn and slow rising of the divine idea that broke at last, full-orbed and glorious, upon the world in the Person and Word of Jesus. Read in this view, the Bible becomes intelligible and full of quickening spiritual truth and power. Under the theories of its inspiration which have hitherto prevailed, it can hardly cease to be a perplexity to honest faith, and the armory from which the skeptic will draw his sharpest weapons.

We need to distinguish carefully what is constant and what is variable in the progress of thought. The earth is a constant quantity; our ideas of it vary more or less at every forward step of scientific discovery. The Bible, as it lies in our hands, is a constant quantity; our interpretations of it change with the growing light. God is a constant quantity—if it be reverent so to speak; man's conceptions of what He is vary with every degree of moral development. The scientist interprets the earth; the theologian, God and the Bible. In their search, each aims to discover all we may know of what these *Stabilities* are. The nearer they approach the reality, the less do their thoughts clash. As each eliminates errors from his line of investigation, their advance converges. Have

we not hope and assurance in this that they will yet stand together? I have ventured to hope that the view, here presented, of the evolution of Christian truth, will do something toward bringing the long estrangement and strife between reason and faith, science and religion, to an end, and help solemnize their heaven-ordained marriage, so that no man will ever again put them asunder.

The Return to Faith.

Isaiah li: 6: Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath, for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but my salvation shall be forever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.

In the spirit of these words, and probably with their declaration in mind, Jesus says: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away." Among all the things that change, there is one thing that stands unchanged---the truth of morality and religion. He that identifies himself with that truth shall stand with it. He shall change only to higher realizations of its perfection.

We speak of the laws of nature as immutable; and rightly. The stone tossed into the air returns to the earth by the force of gravitation. This is a perpetual fact. It was never otherwise since the earth existed; never will be otherwise while the earth shall exist. The law is uniform. But the very objects to whose modes of action we refer when we speak of the laws of nature, the whole material realm with which physical science has to do, are forever undergoing changes that must ultimate in dissolution and recombination in new forms of existence. The rock strata of the earth shall dissolve and turn into star-mist. The fossils, buried in them for ages, shall dissolve with them. Nature's great historic library, the rec-

ord of millions of changes and generations of life upon this earth, running through millions of years, like the famous collection of ancient Alexandria, shall turn to ashes. The very suns that we call fixed stars shall burn out. Science unites with scripture in the testimony that the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment; and God shall fold them up, and they shall be changed. They have not existed from eternity; they shall not exist to eternity. But the realm of being, whose laws of action the Word of Christ unfolds, is not touched with this mutability. It abides. That Word shall not pass away. It opens to us the truths of the world of spiritual life---that world whose highest laws are duty, aspiration, and love. We are in that realm now. We build for eternity. The virtues we form to-day that strike the key of the eternal harmonies of duty, aspiration, and love, assimilate us to God and all holy intelligences. These will shine on when the fixed stars shall have burned out.

The Word of Christ is the art of right living. As it embodies in practical form the highest truths of morality and religion, it is the immutable standard of life. It can never cease to be this till the principles of duty and love are reversed, or moral beings cease to exist. "The chief end of man" is to bring his whole being into conformity with this standard. The highest use of life's discipline, as of the knowledge of science or of human history, will be found in the aid it gives to adjust ourselves prop-

erly in our moral relations to God and our fellow men according to the terms of that Divine Word. By that do we best learn how to become true souls---true to ourselves, our neighbor, and our God.

Now one who is morally earnest and true will always bear two traits: First, he will seek to know the truth that bears on his duties in every relation. He loves it, and searches for it as the miner for gold. Secondly, when he finds the truth, he acts upon it. To know duty, and not do it, is to him a shameful divorce of things that God hath joined together. It is doing violence to his nature. To see a good thing that he might do, or an evil he might abate, and remain inactive or indifferent, would require an evil transformation of his whole character. It would imply something of the baseness that can stand by and look unmoved upon the consummation of an outrage. To see one fallen and not want to raise him up; to see one struggling to rise and not reach forth the helping hand; to see the earnest struggling in the good cause against opposition, and not join forces with theirs, is equally foreign to every instinct of his being. He wants to know; he is ready to do---these are the never absent traits of such a soul.

How will the times, and the religionists of the times, stand this test? A becoming earnestness must make the inquiry. Let us see. A few evenings since, in this house, a well known clergyman and popular lecturer kindled a round of applause by a vivid picture of the sham Christi-

anity of fashionable city churches, and the cheap shifts with which they keep up appearances of doing something to give the gospel to the poor, by missionary chapels and "straw preachers." The picture was just. The evil is real. The applause, even in church, may not have been untimely. But is it enough to see and confess the evil? Will that make us true souls? Have we no responsibility in the case? To make an evening's entertainment out of the poor hypocrisies of religious profession, and the miseries and degradation which they insult rather than relieve, is one thing; to feel our own duty in the case, and take hold of the need with the hand of help, is quite another.

Let us take the case home. Yonder are the wandering masses, rich and poor, with little thought and less care for religion. Here are comfortably cushioned pews, vacant Sunday after Sunday. We find our own very enjoyable. The expense, if not quite up to the fashionable figure, is quite beyond the purse of many a wanderer yonder. Are we giving ourselves any concern to bring these self-outcasts from the church and these empty seats together? We often print at the end of our church notice the words, "All cordially invited." Does the heart or the conduct second the invitation? Is that all we can do? Can we use no other means to send our influence beyond our own limited circle? The question is a little uncomfortable. But self-respect, if we mean to be true to our professions, demands that we ask it of ourselves. While we

applaud the picture of an indolent and heartless Christianity, we are in some danger of making ourselves the reality. The case is too serious to be enjoyed as an evening's entertainment and then dismissed. What can be done? Or what ought we to attempt?

Here the facts confronting us half stagger me. I confess that, for reasons which will soon appear, I am not sanguine of early results, even if we try and do our best. Not that the gospel has lost its power. That is charged with the same vitality as ever to regenerate human hearts, and purify and transform human lives. But two difficulties stand in the way: First, to get the true gospel; secondly, to find a channel through which it may be brought into contact with the minds and hearts of these unchurched masses. It must be the real gospel. No substitute, no counterfeit, can give the life that comes from the real; no more than the cold marble image can send the thrill of life that comes from the warm human touch. And then, if we had the true gospel, as vital as it fell in living words from the lips of the Christ himself, there are so many thick layers of doubt, and prejudice, and superstition, and downright unbelief to be broken through and torn away before it could be made to touch these masses which most need it, that I fear a long, hard preliminary work must be done, before we can hope for its large success. Suppose that we should resolve that, for one society under the sun, we would shape our order to meet the case. We take counsel of the "holy grumblers."

We put away the lofty airs of fashion. We clothe ourselves with the garments of humility. We say that here shall be seen the equality of discipleship that walked by the side of the Redeemer himself. Then we throw open our church doors; we take our names off the pews; we proclaim abroad that here is a Christian church where every seat is free to every one who will come and occupy it, and where the gospel can be had without money and without price. Then we add to all this a real and hearty welcome to every comer at our sociables, and make the humblest feel that there they are accepted on an equality with the most wealthy and fashionable that honor these gatherings with their presence. What would you see? These masses flocking into these seats and heartily identifying themselves with this society and its work? No! Not a dozen a year more than now. And why? They don't want what is called the gospel. They don't believe that it is either necessary or good for them. And they do not know that they would find anything different from that strange compound of philosophic guesses, church rites, monstrous dogmas and childish superstitions, mingled with many grains of real truth, which they have been taught to call by that name, if they should come here. That compound they do not believe in. They want no more of it. They would not come to hear if you should make your pews ever so free.

I speak from experience when I say this. Permit me to tell you how I learned it. When this church was or-

ganized, ten years ago, I said it must be a true Christian church, for the poor as well as the rich. We started in Brayton Hall, doors open, seats all free. We sent out our welcome. The people did not come in. I said they did not know what we meant; I would go to them and tell them. I would follow the Christ, whose distinction was that he preached the gospel to the poor. So I went down below Seventh street, and in Judge Fogg's office, kindly thrown open to me, called in those who would come, talked to them in a familiar way, and invited conversation on the great theme. Judge Fogg said it was the most interesting meeting he ever attended. A few more came in the next Sunday. The address was brief; the following conversation still more animated. At the third meeting, they said it was too good a thing to be shut up in such narrow limits, and we must go up town into a larger hall, and give all a chance. We must organize. We must have a President and by-laws. We must observe parliamentary order. It took the name of "The Society of Free Inquiry." Very soon it turned into a sort of free debating club, where every sort of self-conceit came in to ventilate its decimal of an idea. It was little better than a public resort for amusement, or, at best, entertainment, and fortunately died with a crowded debate on "Romanism and Liberty as related to Public Education," between the late President Durant, of our University, and our well known fellow townsman, Mr. Zach. Montgomery.

This taught me one lesson, viz., that the preacher who

goes to the people must have a gospel to which he can hold them as the main interest. It must not be the starting point of debate over a thousand curious but irrelevant questions, that do not touch the immediate personal moral need. It must be no boggling over theological or metaphysical puzzles, such as whether the Christ had two souls, or whether God exists in three personalities, or how many angels can find foot-hold together on the point of a needle. It must be more than a scientific interest; more than food for the intellect, or stimulus to curiosity. It must vitally touch the life of the soul. Its herald must be able to say to men, first, "This gospel commends itself to your reason; it is its own authority. You can see it to be true if you will consent to consider it without prejudice." Then he must be able to add with equal confidence: "It presents the first matter of life to your consideration. You should postpone every other unsettled question till you have adjusted yourself rightly to this." No other kind of gospel is worth preaching.

So I brooded over this matter for nine years, never losing sight of it for a single day. Meantime, I was reconsidering the whole system that had come to me through the pulpit, and Sunday-school, and my theological teachers, as the gospel. I was searching, that I might, if possible, penetrate through tradition and dogma to the central and essential truth of the Eternal Word, that which was for the perpetual need, and for universal man. I sought to winnow out of this the chaff of individual conceits and

temporary opinions. I sought to study man as he is---as human life shows him---that I might, if possible, see what makes his need of a gospel of salvation. I studied the Christ in his own Word and life, that I might see what there is in him to meet that need. I could see clearly enough that I must have a positive faith to preach, and one that would rouse those who accepted it to action. Attacking errors alone would not do. Exploding an error does not give men the truth. To shatter the old dogmas, and tear down the churches, would not build up righteousness. To wrench away idols does not give men the true God. To drive away the ghosts does not furnish them with pleasant company. To banish superstitions does not bring in realities. To pull down is not to build. Building is the difficult thing. Any dirt-delver, with pick and spade, could pull down St. Paul's or St. Peter's, or the Cathedral of Milan. To build better would require a genius surpassing a Wren or an Angelo, aided by the master workman. Much that we have boasted over as our brave progress in religion, has been this cheap work of destruction. The dirt-delvers of theology have been very busy, and have made great shoutings over their achievements, when they have leveled away some turret, or pinnacle, or porch, or vestry, too rotten to stand alone much longer. Let us not undervalue their work. It was necessary. But the time to build is now upon us. The dirt-delvers stand without plan, perplexed and hesitating before the work.

During the maturing process of my own mind, I had firmly resolved that I would never preach my *opinions* as settled truths; that you who look to me for spiritual food should never find me distributing the unripe fruits of my thought among you. If I expressed an opinion to you, it was given only as an opinion, If I doubted, I never failed to speak the doubt. I have dealt honestly with you and with myself, whether wisely or not. At last I reached convictions in which my own mind found rest and confidence. Truth in its substance as bread for the soul's hunger; truth in its relations as self-consistent and satisfying the reason, and truth in its adaptation to the times, seemed to open the revelation of new possibilities of practical success in persuading men to the faith of Christ.

I resolved to make a new effort to preach the Eternal Word to the people---not to the poor, not to the rich, but to all who would hear me. Full of enthusiasm, I went down below Seventh street again, hired Van Winkle Hall at my own expense, hoping that a larger would soon be needed, seated it reasonably well, banished the contribution-box, went from house to house during the week, explained my design, and invited the people to come. I associated with me persons of good powers of popular address, in full sympathy with the object. The papers quietly announced our movement. Our choir kindly came down to sing for us. We met through the Sunday evenings of two months or more. I will not dwell on the results. Suffice it to say that nearly all who came at-

tended some form of preaching elsewhere, and no larger hall was ever needed.

From this experiment, two suspicions, which had sometimes risen in my mind in previous reflection on the matter, were confirmed: First, that it is not the obstacles which fashion and wealth put in the way of the people that keep them from hearing the gospel; secondly, that some changed conception of the whole matter of religion, some new way of looking at the subject, must create in the minds of the masses a new sense of their need of religious faith and worship, or they will never come into the churches. A revolution of thought must precede an awakening of earnestness. Look at these two points. Is it aristocracy and fashion that keep the poor out of the churches? The Romanists find no difficulty in crowding their gorgeous and expensive cathedrals, although the gulf that separates the rich and the poor socially in their communion is as broad, at least, as in any other. All flock together around their altar and ritual. And why? Because they have succeeded in keeping up the belief in those masses that there is something to be obtained there, *and nowhere else*, which is essential to their temporal and eternal welfare. They feel that their religion is a necessity. But you say that it is ignorance that flocks around the altars standing in the dim religious light of their superstitions. Educate the people, let in the day, touch their minds with the best thought of the time, and they will turn skeptics and stay away. Aye, indeed! I grant you that. Too well they

see that the desk of the public school teacher and the altar of their worship cannot stand long side by side. But are you going to say there is no possible form of Christian faith and worship which education will not banish? Must the night of ignorance around the altar of prayer be eternal? When I believe that, I go down from this pulpit the last time. I will preach no faith which cannot bear the sunshine. With my whole soul I believe the religion which the Christ really taught is the one want of the multitude which dwarfs every other. If that religion were taught in the churches, and the people felt their need of it, there would not be room for them. Wealth and fashion would not keep them away. They would crowd them aside if they were in their way, as they crowd them aside at a public fair. Pew rents would be no bar. They are willing to pay for what they want; or if they have no money, they would gladly take it for granted, when such a need is concerned, that you are in earnest when you invite them to come and share the conveniences of worship and instruction you have provided. But the fact is they are indifferent or hostile. They will give neither time nor money for what they don't want, much less for what they despise. Some believe neither in God nor in immortality. More are vague and confused in their religious notions. There is a dim feeling that a better hope for their future would be a good thing, but they know not what. They doubt whether any religion they know anything about would do them good. They are uncertain,

so they drift along, and wait to see what will come. The worst feature of the case is that through all this scepticism, and uncertainty, and indifference, there runs a deep undercurrent of contempt for doctrines that have been held up to them as the essential thing in Christianity. They look at history, and feel that some of those doctrines are at once a menace to their mental liberty, and an insult to their intelligence. They will not go where the sound of them offends their ears. They are told that they are in danger of being lost forever, in a sense from which every idea of a just God, or of possible truth, revolts. They fear no such danger. They want no Saviour from such fictitious terrors. They prefer to throw their chances on the opposite teaching, which tells them that they are not lost, never were, and never will be. It looks the more reasonable of the two, and indifference finds comfort in the assurance that there is no danger. The natural and immutable tendencies of moral experience, under both these views of their condition, are lost sight of. This modern confusion of tongues among religious teachers befalls them. Their attention is completely diverted from the real need of their souls. Speak of religion as an essential thing to the well-being of man, and they do not know what you mean. Preach to them just as Christ preached, and their minds would be on the fictions of the creeds. Talk of salvation from sin, and you are thinking of one thing, they of another; you of a bad moral condition in men, they of some outward penalty to be inflicted

upon them; you of their need of Christ's helping sympathy in their efforts to rise into some sense of God's truth and love; they of running away from a whip. Your words are lost in the air.

No temporary excitement of religious feeling is going to disturb this deep indifference. Our Hammond and Moody revivals but ripple the surface; they are not felt at all in the depths. Indeed it may be doubted whether the final effect of these superficial excitements is not to deepen the indifference. The churches have come to rely on them largely, if not mainly, for new conquests; but the reaction often sinks and stays below the point of apathy from which the movement started. It is the young, chiefly, that are caught up by these spiritual whirlwinds, and three years after the gale, hardly one in ten will be found maintaining their religious interest or activity. That means nine out of ten still further alienated from the ways of the church. The modern evangelist, however well-meaning, and even useful in certain directions, will not bring the remedy for the times.

What, then, is the first thing to be done? The answer is seen in the necessities of the case. Do away with this confusion of thought; disabuse the minds of the people of these fictions that have taken the place of Christianity; then concentrate their attention on the essential truth that comes to us from the lips and life of Jesus of Nazareth. When that is seen as it is, men will begin to feel their need. That truth will commend itself. Their hunger

will know its bread, and they will seek that bread wherever it can be found.

In order to diffuse this new way of thinking through the general mind, three things must be accomplished:

1. The people at large must be brought to see what the Bible really is, as the most advanced and reverent Christian scholars of the day have come to understand its history and interpret its inspiration. This alone will be a revolution. Only in this true understanding and interpretation can our Sacred Scriptures ever come back into general respect and confidence as the true light of religion. This need will make the theme of my next discourse.

2. The people must be brought to think of Christianity, not as a miracle, but as a part of God's unchanging order in the evolution and manifestation of his being and purposes. They must learn that God's methods in saving and governing man are as much in the order and uniformity of law as his methods in creating and controlling the material world. The profound change in religious thinking which this point involves will become apparent as we give it further examination. The belief in special divine interpositions in the affairs of this world, and the expectation of them, has been the paralysis of conscience and all moral energy, and the disease of religious experience. The sense of law in God's methods will bring back new health and energy.

3. Then the interpretation of Christ's teachings must be brought to harmonize with this view of divine inspiration

and government. Repentance, faith, forgiveness, regeneration, atoning sacrifice, the indwelling and power of the Holy Spirit, the resurrection and final judgment, have all been carried more or less into a realm of fiction and caprice. They must be brought back into the world of actual life and experience. When interpreted by reality, their truth will be confessed, their need will be felt.

Thus presented, that Word of Christ which shall never pass away would come to men as almost a new religion. It is no divine scheme of salvation thrown into this world by miracle, no after-thought or splice to mend a break in God's work, but the orderly unfolding of heaven's purpose in forces that have been steadily working toward completion from the foundation of the world. It presents to men a Saviour who came in the order of nature, which is the order of God, to enlarge the revelation of divine love found less clearly in nature; appealing to the heart of enmity in the mighty persuasions of self-sacrifice for the hater, pointing the penitent, not to a way of escape from the obligations of law, but to the healing that comes to the contrite soul by returning into harmony with eternal law, which is only another name for eternal love, beckoning the soul, self-enslaved and struggling with its chains, to the open door of mercy which leads to the bosom of God, filling earth with hope and eternity with glory. Hold up such a gospel to men in its divine simplicity and reality, and reason and heart and all the soul will respond, "This is the Saviour we need."

Slowly this revolution of thought may come. You and I may see but the beginning. But come it will. The eternal order and nature of things will not change. Facts will remain as they are. The growing light must reveal what is. The poor fictions which men have put in the place of reality will disappear as ghosts vanish in the advancing dawn.

The Word of God Unbound.

John v: 39. Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me.

The Old Testament scriptures testify of Christ as the sprouting acorn and the growing sapling testify of the full-grown oak. The growing life prophesies its own completeness. That germ of the kingdom of God among men, which first becomes apparent to us in the account which the sacred writings give us of the faith of Abraham, the enlarging growth of which can be traced through all the pre-Christian stages of Hebrew history, reached its maturity and perfection in the Christ, and from him was prepared to scatter its ripe seed over the field of the world. I shall claim to-day that, whatever we may doubt in that history, or abate from it as fiction, or legend, or incredible absurdity, we can trace through its progress, with a distinctness that leaves no reasonable doubt, the expanding of that germ of divine truth into clearer meaning and broader proportions, till we see it culminate in what we may accept with certainty as the highest manifestation of divine truth to man---the words and life of Jesus of Nazareth. I take up this subject that you may see the grounds of certainty upon which our religion rests, and how unwise and unnecessary it is to base it upon matters that are, and perhaps to the end of time must remain, in question.

The general impression prevails among Christians, that the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments, were composed by certain authors who were divinely inspired and infallibly guided, whose names are attached to them, and to whose hands their origin can be traced without any break in the chain of historic evidence. Among those who do not accept the Bible as divinely inspired, the impression is equally prevalent that this is the claim made for those scriptures by all reliable Christian teachers, and that it is necessary to substantiate the assumption before they can be made the valid basis of religion. I think it will appear in the course of this discussion that both of these impressions are erroneous. Modern scholars and interpreters claim, on the contrary, that their researches have demonstrated beyond question that there is no such certainty respecting the authorship of a large portion of the Bible as has been supposed, and considerable portions of it, in the Old Testament especially, could not possibly have come from the hands to which they have been popularly ascribed. The Pentateuch, for example, or first five books of the Bible. In our early years, we were never allowed to think of any other than Moses, the great law-giver of Israel, as having had **anything** to do with its composition. But the Biblical interpreters referred to are now telling us that it could never have had existence in its present form, or as a whole, till after the carrying away of Israel to Babylon, eight hundred years later than the death of Moses. It had long ago been noticed that the

last of these five books contained an account of the death of Moses himself, and it was felt that an author could hardly be credited with acting as reporter of his own funeral ceremonies. But it was easy to suppose that some contemporaneous scribe attached this short addition to the work of Moses to make his personal history more complete. But a closer scrutiny discovers scores of allusions which imply that the writer was living in a later age; such as, "The Canaanite was then in the land;" "These are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel." Where else should the Canaanite be while Moses was leading Israel through the wilderness, we ask; and who is this writing the history when the Canaanite is no longer in the land, and after the first king had reigned over Israel, more than four hundred years after Moses? Moreover, if any other author should have written like this of himself: "Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth," we should not feel that such a report of his humility from his own hand quite sustained the claim. We would be glad to save the credit of our hero by finding the hand of an interviewer in the fulsome praise. There is also internal evidence, say these scholars, that these books were made up, in large part, of various documents and traditions of different and unknown origin; the style and many other distinctive peculiarities forbid the idea that they all sprang from the same mind. By whom they were gathered and combined

in their present form, with considerable additions of this latest compiler, we know not, and probably never will know.

So of the Psalms the evidence is such that no competent interpreter, with all the facts before him, can resist the conclusion that the larger part ascribed to David never could have been composed by him. Professor Robertson Smith, inclined to be liberal in his allowance, does not feel certain of more than two. Larger proportions of the prophecies are conceded to have come from the persons whose names they bear; but of these, again, many exceptions must be made. Notably of Isaiah. The last third of that grandest of all the prophetic writings must be credited, not to Isaiah, but to one who has come to be designated among the interpreters as "the great Unknown."

When we come into the New Testament, the light grows clearer; but even here we are astonished to find that the "four gospels" cannot be proved to have existed in the form to which they come to us earlier than one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty years after the crucifixion of Jesus. No ancient author pretends to have ever seen the original manuscript of either of the evangelists. And while made up of memorials and traditions that bear reasonable evidence of authenticity, so far as they are historical, no one can dispute but that there was large opportunity and strong motives for the introduction of marvelous and legendary matter into the course of their narrative. It is the view of many, Matthew

Arnold among the number, that the profound speculations concerning the "Logos" or Word, in the gospel ascribed to John, should be credited to some highly cultivated and philosophic Christian Jew, of Alexandrian education, who took occasion to unite the peculiar views of his own school of thinkers with the memorials of Jesus that he wrote out, possibly from the lips of that apostle himself. The manner of alluding to places in Palestine with which the "beloved disciple" must have been perfectly familiar, betrays the hand of the stranger. It is impossible to examine the whole composition closely, and retain the belief that it came just as we receive it, from the pen of John.

Of the epistles, there is general agreement of testimony that the larger ones ascribed to Paul, with the exception of "Hebrews," bear the unmistakable impress of that author. Some of the shorter ones are decidedly dubious. Among the number must be reckoned the second and third of John, and the epistle of James. The second of Peter is counted out entirely by an almost unanimous vote.

I can find room in this discourse for only a bare outline statement of the case thus submitted to the judgment of Christendom. But who are the men that presume to write such things of our Sacred Scriptures. Not, I beg you to notice, the destructive rationalistic critics of France and Germany only, like Renan, Baur, and Strauss, but many of the most earnest and reverent, as well as profoundly learned clergy of the churches of England and

Scotland, as the late Dr. Temple and Dr. Arnold, of Rugby, Bishop Colenso, Dean Stanley, and Prof. Robertson Smith, just now under the maul of Presbytery for his article on the Bible, written for the new Encyclopedia Britannica. These authors differ widely from each other on minor points. They often stand opposed to each other as to the real date of some of the sacred writings, especially of the older documents, and also in regard to the degree in which the facts disclosed by their researches affect the credibility of the history or the divine authority of the teaching. Some insist on a basis of fact in the narrative, where others affirm that the whole tissue of the story must have been spun and woven in the imagination of an author living centuries after the pretended period of the events. But on the main question a growing unanimity will be observed. Those who apply themselves to the investigation without bias, and take pains to render themselves competent to form a judgment in the case, invariably agree that the facts which have already come to light, when made known to the people, must compel an immense modification of the current views in the church respecting the way in which God is revealed in the Bible. Those facts will remain what they are. They cannot much longer be covered. They will out. Like the facts of astronomy, or geology, or evolution, they will compel the human mind to bend to them; they are not going to bend to its pre-conceptions. Dr. Arnold, many years ago, predicted the shock they would give ere long to the popular

reverence for the Bible. He knew but a part of what is now known, but he knew enough to assure him that a great change would come. I have not enjoyed opportunities of original investigation in the questions here raised. I make no pretensions to speak on the authority of my own labors in that line. But I have entered into the labors of the masters of these questions. I have studied both sides. In so doing, I have found the notions in which my theological training aimed to establish me, respecting the way in which the Bible was given to man, dropping away in spite of myself. I have been led by the very obligations of my position to inquire, for myself, as for you who look to me as a teacher in spiritual things, What can we rely on? Is there anything we can accept as established and certain beyond the possibility of being shaken by any researches and discoveries that have been made, or that ever can be made? What may we hold for our own life and hope; what may we teach our children, in the assurance that it can never deceive or fail us or them as the foundation of religious trust? Must we throw away the Bible? Must we count the religion which its teachings inspire and nourish a delusion? Or may it be that all these changes touching the letter, the mere shell of the truth, will only serve to set free the substance and spirit of the Word for new and higher demonstrations of power? It is to give you the answers in which my own mind has found rest, that I have ventured to bring forward this theme. The time is more than ripe to open it to the peo-

ple at large, and prepare them for the impending change. There is an honest timidity about attempting this on the part of many good people, which I cannot share. I see neither its need nor its wisdom. It seems to me to be running into the very disasters which it so dreads to bring on. It puts on a face of solemn alarm, and whispers under bated breath, "The facts may compel the learned to change, but hush! how terribly will you shake the trust and disturb the peace of many sincere souls, beautiful in the childlike simplicity of their faith! Do not, oh do not trouble such! They can never separate the incidental from the essential in inspiration; the form from the substance. Shake their belief in the infallible truth of every letter of the sacred record, and their whole Bible will be gone. Every dot is a vital part to them. Their mistaken beliefs do not harm them, dear, good souls! Leave them alone!" Ah, there is infinite mischief in this smothering of light. The time has gone by for treating the people as babes that must be thus tenderly lapped on the knees of authority, and fed the milk of the Word with bib and teaspoon. Many of them are ahead of their spiritual guides. They have leaped from the lap of authority and made their way out of doors. They see something of what is passing in the sunlight, and wonder much at what it all means. If a little knowledge might prove a dangerous thing to some childlike believers, so beautiful in the simplicity of their trust, that little has already come to multitudes, disturbing their faith, and a little more may neu-

tralize its danger. Shall the quiet of these comfortable little ones whose peace is never ruffled by the gentlest breeze of doubt, be held so precious as to forbid us doing anything for these vaster endangered multitudes? The only safety is in the forward march. It can never be found by going into perpetual winter-quarters to nurse our comfortable camp-fires, for fear we may catch cold, or encounter too stout a foe if we move on.

And now let us turn to consider the great outstanding facts and doctrines of the Bible that are placed beyond reasonable question, and see if they are not a certain and sufficient basis of religion.

A marvelous race came into notice over three thousand years ago, whose historic life can be clearly traced down to our time. They dwell among the nations of to-day "a peculiar people." Their own traditions say that they sprung from an ancient Patriarch, named Abraham, who emigrated from Ur, of the Chaldees, westward to the eastern shore of the Mediterranean, that he might found a nation devoted to the worship of the MOST HIGH GOD. Some of the critics insist that this name represents, not a historical person, but a tribe; others, that it is but a myth. Whether it be the one or the other, no matter to our faith. The name does stand for the germinal idea of a great religion. The nation that cherished and evolved that germ must have had an origin. Their faith must have had its beginning. There must have been a life in its germ capable of the mighty growth that has sprung from it. Great

religions do not spring forth without origin any more than great nations. A feeble germ cannot grow into a great religion any more than a puff-ball can grow into a world. The central idea of that faith must have originated in an individual. Religions do not rise from masses of men any more than constitutions of government or systems of philosophy. There must be an originating mind. With what person soever, standing at or near the dim origin of Israel, the worship of the Most High God first rose, represented to us by whatever name, or by no name, he clearly deserves to be counted "the Father of all them that believe." Inheriting his mighty idea and its living fruits, small trouble should it give us that we cannot be certain of his name and the minute incidents of his life.

In a tolerably clear historic light, this race emerges to our view in the land of Egypt, as a people in crushing servitude. A great leader and law-giver, Moses by name, rises among them, delivers them from the hand of their oppressors, leads them forth from the land to find a new place of habitation, consolidates their separate tribes into a nation, gives them the "ten words," or commandments, for their moral and religious guidance, and establishes them in the worship of Jehovah. So much the learned critics find historic reasons to concede. It is enough for our faith. The man who had wisdom to do so much for his people must have been able to give them many things besides. His power is seen in the consolidated nation. We know that under some leadership this people con-

quered possession of the land of Canaan, which their traditions claim to have been divinely promised to Abraham as a home for his descendants. There we can trace the outline of their varied history for twelve hundred years. No history like it of any other people. Lapses from the worship of Jehovah into idolatry through all the earlier centuries, morals growing too corrupt for the land to bear; but great reformers, prophets of Jehovah, ever rising to denounce the judgments of heaven upon their infidelity and iniquities, to call them to repentance and return to the God of their fathers; to insist on purity of morals and righteousness of life as the essential condition of his favor, and to fire the hearts of the faithful with the divine promise of a magnificent future in store for the race. Grand souls were those old prophets; teachers such as no other religion or nation of ancient days gave the world. Providence wrought with their words in the discipline of the people. Disaster after disaster fell upon their armies in wars with enemies round about them. Humiliations of defeat, subjugation, and captivity followed each other in succession, until the great body of the people were borne away together from their land of promise into the country of their conqueror. This purged the virus of idolatry from their blood. The remnant that came back to their old homes after seventy years brought in them an abhorrence of idols that counted any reverence or worship paid to any other than Jehovah an inexpressible abomination and the sum of all villainies. Their religion thus demonstrated its

purifying power. It contained some mighty element of truth that made the nation purer and better as it grew older—a significant fact that I think you will discover in the history of no other religion of the ancient world.

But now we come to facts bearing more vitally upon our faith. We turn to Northern Palestine, to the geographical division called Gallilee, and to the small, mean city of Nazareth. Here is a rude, half-savage population, of bad reputation even in an age that was not nice in its moral discriminations. From these Gallilean Jews, about eighteen and one-half centuries ago, rose a most remarkable character, in the person of a workingman of this provincial city. We have what purports to be a fourfold biography of him in the first four books of the New Testament, written by his intimate friends. We may doubt the miraculous origin claimed for him, the precocious wisdom by which he is reported to have astonished the doctors of the temple at twelve years of age, and the supernatural deeds by which he still more profoundly amazed the multitudes. These are not the pivots of our faith. Prove them facts or prove them fictions to-day, and the religion he taught would be and remain just the same. In no sense do they enter into its substance. But this we know—the testimony weaves itself in with all subsequent history, and speaks everywhere in the best life of Christendom to-day—this obscure carpenter, Jesus of Nazareth, conceived the idea of a universal kingdom of Truth, to be built up within the hearts of men by faith in God; its sole

weapons of conquest truth and love, its fundamental law "Good Will to Men," its symbol of power the cross, its battle-cry "self-sacrifice," its title to promotion humility, its noblest service kind deeds to the poor and needy, its aim the redemption of universal humanity from sin and all forms of evil. No dream of philosopher was ever so bold. The ambitions of the great world-conquerors look puny in comparison. It would seem to indicate insanity, or else some divine insight into the power of truth. This humble Jewish workingman goes quietly about the effort to establish this kingdom. He gathers a dozen followers around him from equally humble stations in life, preaches repentance of sin to the people, purity of morals, righteousness in all actions, self-control, self-devotion to truth, forbearance under wrongs and persecutions, love to enemies, faith in God, and a living trust in him as a Father and ever-present Spirit of love and helpfulness. He crowns this simple teaching with the assurance to men that the soul shall live beyond the grave, and shall there be judged according to the deeds done in the body. After two or three years of this public teaching, limited wholly to Palestine, he was accused of being a dangerous agitator against the peace of civil government; and foreseeing his death as near, commissioned his few followers to preach the gospel of his kingdom after he was gone, and then suffered crucifixion at the hands of the civil authorities.

These humble disciples took up the word of their master. They began to proclaim that he was risen from the

dead, and was not only alive but with them in a divine Spirit of truth and power, to move the hearts of men and save from sin. With such enthusiasm did they deliver their message and pursue their work, and such influence did they gain with the people, that in a few years they had filled the most populous portions of Asia and Northern Africa with the faith of Christ; and in less than three centuries his religion had subverted idolatry, and gained a controlling power in the world-wide empire of Rome.

Now take this religion whose light we have seen opening more and more broadly and brightly through the centuries from Abraham (or whatever the name under which its first life germinated), to Jesus, perfected in the latter—take it for just what *you* can see it to be. Strip it of all dubious incident, of all myth and miracle; let it stand on its intrinsic merits. What do you find? Not one essential doctrine but commends itself to your highest reason and conscience. Not one that you can set aside if you would have any religion that gives hope and life. Consider. You will raise no debate over the morality of Jesus. The Sermon on the Mount, and other utterances of his, so far as the duties of man to man are concerned, but echo the voice of reason. Morality and Christianity are so far on the same ground. But turn to what Jesus teaches of God and man's relations to him. One God! You will not quarrel with him there. That God "our Father," tenderly loving and caring for us. There is something in that word which the human heart grapples

the moment it is heard, and says, "If he *be* God, he cannot be other than such a God." That Father ever with us, *dwelling in* those that receive him in faith by his Spirit, teaching, comforting, strengthening, giving them to know and love the truth. This doctrine of the Holy Spirit I accustom myself to cherish as the central truth of the religion which Jesus taught. In experience it is the realization of "Immanuel"—God with us. It is the life of faith. It is victory over evil. It involves every other truth at the basis of religion. And yet, when you reflect, that doctrine is little more than a truism to the reason. To deny it is virtual atheism. Is there a God? Is he here with me? And yet can he not, will he not aid me? Must I think of him as an indifferent spectator of my search after truth and struggles to do his will? Is he interested, but powerless to aid? The thought would undeify him. Doubtless there are laws which he never overpasses in the manner and degree of imparting his help, immutable conditions under which we must receive; penitence must prepare the way for him to give peace; faith must lift the eyes to the light; prayer must inhale the divine life—all this Jesus taught, and reason affirms with equal emphasis. But to say that a dead, impenetrable wall of separation rises between the spiritual nature of man and the Spirit of God, cutting off all possible communion or communication between them, shocks every instinct of reason and truth in the soul. "To know God," says Jesus, "is eternal life." Theodore Parker insists that

the full-grown moral man is "conscious of God." And even Buckle talks of "the fine instinct of immortality in man." Are this consciousness and this instinct realities? May we not well believe, then, that to a soul like Jesus, whose insight seemed to penetrate every secret of the interior life of man, the realities of this consciousness and instinct ever lay open and present to the eye like household pictures? To other powers of the mind we may be unable to demonstrate the being of God or immortal life, the fundamental truths of religion; if these are closed, the soul remains dark. But it is much to lower natures that one like Jesus spoke of God and immortality as facts at the heart of all life that were never to be called in question. Wonderfully do his words penetrate our inmost being, and commend themselves as heaven's own light. Will you insist that a testimony which stands revealed in its own inherent certainty shall be spoken to you audibly out of the sky, and authenticated by miracle, before you will confess its reliability? Compare the whole Word of Jesus with any other religion the world offers you. Will you doubt which is best for human life? As well doubt whether the unclouded noonday sun shines with a clearer light than the pale crescent of the waning moon. Examine closely, decide honestly, and we have no fear but you will say, that if we are to have any religion at all, it can be no other than the religion of Jesus of Nazareth.

But here the objection will recur, "If we cannot accept the whole record, miracles, predictions, dreams, divine voi-

ces, physical appearances of Deity, and all, as statements of indubitable facts, what can we rely on? Can we reject a part without throwing discredit on the whole? Where shall we draw the line? Who shall tell us what to believe?" I answer, seek the truth; be sure you want to find; ask guidance of the Spirit of Truth; and then *act* upon what you can see and know to be true and best. Draw the line for yourself. Decide for yourself; reject what you must; suspend judgment where you doubt; take warmly to your heart what commends itself as divine, and you will make no fatal mistake. Can you not doubt what is dubious, without throwing discredit on what every instinct of the soul feels to be true? Let me illustrate what I conceive to be the intrinsic force of this objection. It is well known that the wonderful system of law which comes to us in the Justinian Code, elaborated in the peculiar genius of the old Roman mind to meet the exigencies of government rising through many centuries of their rugged history, is accepted in its fundamental principles as a safe guide in the practice and decisions of our courts of law to-day. Those principles are self-evident, and good for all men and all times. But now imagine your wise critic to take it into his head that this practical use of that old code is behind the times. There are so many legends and absurd incidents mingled with the story of its growth! Why will sensible men so stultify their reason? He repeats the story of Romulus, founder of the nation, suckled by a wolf; and of Quintus Curtius, who jumped into the

chasm that yawned across the forum, that it might close over him and leave smooth ground for after generations; quotes the sayings claimed to have been miraculously uttered through the priestly oracles; makes a long story of other wonders of like nature, scattered through the whole history of the people, and then scornfully exclaims: "What a tissue of absurdities! What confidence can you place in a code of laws purporting to have come through such a long line of incredible nonsense?" You would reply that this is egregious trifling. Those eternal principles of justice and right shine by their own inherent light; depend in no slightest degree for their authority upon any incidents or legends attending the history of their introduction as human laws, although the real facts of that history may illustrate and make clearer their practical application. They commend themselves. They need no other credentials than their usefulness to men.

Now turn to the "Ten Commandments," conceded to have come, substantially as we receive them, from the hand of Moses. Does the credibility or authority of that divine Code depend upon our ability to prove that it was literally written on two tables of stone by the finger of God? Turn to the Sermon on the Mount, the Parable of the Prodigal Son, the words of Jesus asserting the fatherhood of God, the forgiveness of the penitent sinner, the presence and help of the Holy Spirit in the heart of faith. Are you going to hesitate over receiving these blazing, noon-day truths of the soul because you cannot be sure

that all the setting of miracle and story in which they come to you is entirely demonstrable? Is the diamond any the less pure and precious because you are not quite sure of the quality of the casket? The law found in Sacred Scripture for your practical guidance and self-discipline, the Spirit promised to aid your search for truth, and your efforts to obey its light, the God in whom your trust may repose, the whole substance of the religion you learn from the lips and life of Jesus, is just the same, whichever way the weight of evidence respecting the marvels of the record may turn the scale. Your soul's moral welfare, here and hereafter, is not made to hinge on a theory to be proven, nor on a fact that cannot be demonstrated, nor on witnesses who died many centuries ago, and cannot now be put on the stand; it depends solely on truth that you can see here and know to be true. I cannot express how childish the trifling of this objection with the vastest interests seems to me. When I watch the unfolding of God's self-manifestation seen through the whole history of the Jewish race, when I see its glory culminate and complete itself in the Man of Nazareth, when I feel how the truth he speaks, and the truth he lives, and the truth he is, meets and satisfies the deepest wants and divinest yearnings of my spiritual being, I could sooner doubt whether the fruits of the earth are good for my bodily hunger and nourishment than I can doubt that his gospel of hope and comfort and love is good for my soul. No spot that the telescope of critical learning can detect

on the face of that Sun can make me question for a moment whether it is the true light of the world.

I cannot forbear adding two or three suggestions in conclusion, respecting the advantages which this view will give in reading the Bible.

1. It will relieve the reader of that strange repulse of feeling which certain incongruous elements of the Book are sure to awaken in the thoughtful mind. Can this be of God? is the secret question. It rises even in early childhood. Words cannot tell the torture it causes some who dare not refuse to read, yet dare not doubt. Here this incubus is lifted from the mind. Our view permits us to see how these discordant human conceits came to be mingled with divine truth. It gives us the Bible as a teacher, not as a tyrant over our faith. It offers its utterances, not under the raised whip of authority, saying, "Receive every word, however incredible it may seem to you, on pain of eternal wrath;" it offers counsels of wisdom in the name of love, never trying to force upon us treasures which we cannot see to be valuable. If we find it impossible to believe that a lifeless rod in the hand of an ancient prophet turned into a living serpent, and other rods into smaller serpents, only to be swallowed up by the first, which again, upon being grasped by the prophet, was reconverted into a rod, as before; or if we cannot believe that at the hour when Jesus was crucified the graves cast forth their dead, to appear among their living friends again in the Holy City, our view makes room for this in-

firmity, if infirmity it be, and does not insist upon the impossible as the inexorable condition of our salvation. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good," is at once its counsel and our right.

2. It will free us from the impositions of tyrannous religious dogmas. The strongest hand of iron upon the human soul has been the assumption of an infallibility in the letter of the Bible, which man must not question, on peril of God's displeasure. No device for the suppression of free thought could have been more effectual. Under this assumption has flourished that pettifogging with texts of scripture, by which, as one has said, "anything can be made of anything." There has been no end to the absurdities drawn from the mere chance phrases of the scripture writers, from the mere sound of the words, and imposed on the consciences of men as, a "Thus saith the Lord." We here find the liberty, nay, learn the duty, to inquire whether it be a "thus saith the Lord," or only the opinion of some erring mortal. We shall not receive the words of a book if they contradict the Word of God written in our own hearts. Vast gain! for measureless have been the mischiefs which these human inventions claiming divine authority have wrought in human character—atonements substituted for morality; ceremony put in the place of righteous doing; formal worship compounding with heaven for downright dishonesty; sincerity withered away in the heart of prayer; conscience lulled to sleep, and religion itself turned into a corrupter of virtue, and a

refuge of licentiousness. Here that whole view of Scripture in which these disastrous methods of letting sinners go free of the merited scourge have found suggestion and support, is swept away. Eternal law comes back into authority. That will accept no substitute for righteousness. Conscience regains its sensibility. The refuge in which all depravities of heart and life find impunity is torn away. The motives which lie at the heart of all upright character can resume their place.

3. Under this new interpretation of the Bible, the mind turns instinctively from the form to the substance. "The letter killeth; the spirit giveth life." The interest no longer sticks in the letter, withers under its hard, dry crust, or drivels over a date, or incident, or shade of meaning in a word. The mind goes straight for reality. What is man's condition? What does he need? What are his relations to God, and his inalienable obligations? The Word has a distinct answer. The thoughts set free from the bias of false assumptions and artificial dogmas, find that answer. The soul recognizes the truth that supports its own life.

Law in the Kingdom of God.

Acts xv: 28: For in him we live and move and have our being.

The problem of religion is to bring God near to man. This is the same as to say that it aims to raise in man the *sense* of the fact that God is near him. The fact is a perpetual reality; but man goes through the world with his eyes shut. He makes no discovery of the fact, or if some dim glimpse of it opens on his soul in his higher moments, some mist of the world floats over him and cuts off the vision. He goes on as if he were not walking in the Divine Presence. Religion has often done much to defeat her own aim, and keep man from seeing God, by what she has taught of the way in which he manifests himself. She has asked us to see God in the special and unnatural, rather than to look for him directly in the common, the natural, and the universal. She has led us into the habit of waiting for the special and extraordinary before we would recognize the Divine Presence at all. She tells us of a burning bush seen by the prophet on the side of Sinai three thousand years ago, and bids us bare our heads and "put off our shoes from our feet" before this wonder of the divine power and glory; but she has not enough insisted on the fact that,

"Every common bush is afire with God,"

and that a blazing bramble unconsumed by an hour's flames is a far inferior wonder to many a bush on many a hillside that flames out with the blossoms of spring, and then wears the soberer beauty of summer and autumn through the seasons of many years.

The mistake here is in *separating God from nature*. It looks upon nature as a dead machine, with which God once had something to do, perhaps, as the patentee of the invention, and as having shaped and arranged its parts, and set it in motion. Then it supposes him to have taken his hand from his work and stepped one side to watch and see how it would go. Now it can see no direct manifestation of God except as he reaches in his hand to arrest the order of this machine, and produce a wonder. It asks his special interpositions. It imagines that these are, or might be made, the best proofs of his being, and power, and love. It says that nature grows the lily, and sees not God in its clothing of beauty that outrivals Solomon in all his glory. A little reflection will see that this view puts God far away from us. How much nearer to man will religion bring him when she learns to recognize him in all the energies of nature we see at work around us—in the force that makes the streams flow and the stone fall; in the life that makes the plant grow and the animal strong; in the beating of the pulse, and the thrill or the ache of a nerve! This is what Jesus taught. God “clothes the grass” in its hues of beauty. And this is all involved in Paul's words: “In him we live and move and have our

being." God is *in* nature, and not apart from his work—in us, in our nature, and not away from us. *There* is where we are to look for him. We have much to say in this age about the laws of nature. But what is a law? It is simply the way in which some being or force acts. A law is not a power. It is not the thing that acts. It is only a mode of action. What is the force in nature that acts? Is it the birth of inert matter? If philosophy is right in attributing inertness to matter, it has no power to originate force. It cannot start itself in motion. If this be so, the forces of nature must spring from some living *Will*, the only other conceivable origin of force. Then we shall conclude that the laws of nature are the ways in which this Will acts, or puts forth its energies in self-manifestation. God is the force; the law is his method. And why may we rest with such confidence on the uniformity of these laws? Because the infinite Will that is in them is unchangeable. They are the direct expression of the divine immutability.

And when we make the discovery that God is thus in nature vitally, the very life of her life and the energy of all her forces, the manifestations of his presence become not only constant but reliable. Nature cannot possibly be a counterfeit. No finite being, angel, or demon, or juggler, can produce or copy her realities. They expand into being slowly—the outputting of forces that have the divine patience in them. They are no sudden freak of some hasty agent who cannot wait. They bear the inimitable

stamp of their Original. Can we say this with certainty of any sudden arrest of nature's order, or temporary interposition? A chemist, for aught we know, might construct an asbestos bush that would blaze for a day and not consume. A malign spirit might, for a purpose, heal a fever, or start the current of life afresh in a body from which the breath had departed. The Bible suggests, and even records, miracles of evil spirits. How can you be sure of the divine agency in such manifestations? They do not necessarily imply unlimited power. How really puny does the greatest of these sudden interpositions, or arrests of nature, look beside almost the least of nature's real works. The rose that blazes in your garden through several months of the year—you feel sure that no created agent could do that. It outdoes all the miracles ever reported, as a reliable manifestation of God. So with the heart that throbs steadily on through three score years and ten, sustaining the growth from infancy to maturity. The doctor may hurry or slow the pulse for a day or a week; the magnetic healer may steady the deranged nerves for a like period; but no agent but the God in whom we live and move and have our being could give that heart its wondrous power to throb on through seventy years of life.

And do not imagine that the slowness in which nature works, or the length of time which she takes to accomplish her results detracts anything from the evidence that it is God who is working, or that the suddenness with

which special interpositions come and finish their work and end, adds anything to the evidence of the Divine Presence and power in them. Sober reflection will come to the very opposite conclusion. Time is one verifying element in the manifestation of Him with whom a thousand years is as one day, and one day as a thousand years. The mill of God grinds slowly. It is only the mill of man that sends the grist home the next hour after it is received. The patience of the work in nature proves the present God. It is the child that plants the bean at night, and runs in the morning as soon as he wakes to dig it up and see how it is coming on. The *man* plants and waits through the week of its germination and the months of its growth and ripening, till his patience is rewarded with the increase. God plants and nurtures and waits a thousand or a million years or ages, if need be, for the ripe harvest; and it is just this infinite patience of nature in which we recognize with certainty the presence of the Infinite Worker. Let us not be caught by the suddenness of any manifestations, present or reported, and carried away with the idea that we have in them a revelation of God that can be compared in clearness and certainty with the grand unfoldings of the Purpose that runs through the centuries and the ages.

Religion squanders her greatest advantage when she turns from the uniformity of nature, and lays the chief emphasis of her teaching on miraculous interpositions. You will begin to see, friends, why I am so much in earn-

est to impress this idea that the divine kingdom is one of order. Unchanging law is the sign-manual of God. We know his work, and we know his presence, by that signature. We cannot know him with certainty in any miracle. It is not infinite. It is not, like any growth or object in nature, *a finite part of a universal system or order*. It is a thing by itself. It might be the product of a finite agent—say, if you will, some mighty angel, or some spirit from earth grown to a power manifold greater than is ever attained on earth. It cannot be, in the nature of the case, the sure witness of the present God. The Creator is in the universal and natural directly and manifestly; in the exceptional or miraculous, if at all, only indirectly and through a finite representative. Miracles are as numerous in this day as in any former age. They are as well authenticated as they ever were. I do not deny their reality. That is purely a question of fact, to be determined by testimony. Neither you, nor I, nor Huxley, nor any most competent scientist that has scanned all that is known of material nature, the whole universe with which his science has to do, are competent to deny the possibility of miracles. To do that, we must have looked beyond material nature, and scanned the whole realm of spiritual existences, and become able to say that there is certainly no being in all that realm competent to produce on our earth, impressing itself on our senses, the phenomenon we call a miracle. Let no mortal say that. It is the sheerest dogmatism and presumption in the scientist when

he assumes to do so. I must not be misunderstood as taking that ground. But I am fully prepared to assert my conviction that *the Divine Will or Power is not, and never has been in a single instance, directly exerted to work a miracle.* I so believe from a deep sense that grows up within me as I study the ways of God's working in nature, in life, and in the human soul, that miracle is not one of his ways. I cannot think that he would resort to this mode of manifesting himself, when, in the very nature of the case, as soon as the human mind has grown to a capacity to weigh evidence, the manifestation must be dubious and unsatisfactory. I cannot think that he would resort to this lower evidence, if it be evidence at all, when he has spread all over the face of earth and sky, and woven into every fiber of man's own being, overwhelming proof of his presence and power and goodness—evidence that no finite being can counterfeit. I cannot believe that he would descend from a method which no mind that fully takes it in can resist, to a method which every competent judgment feels to be unreliable. And the more that method is considered, the more will it be distrusted as a manifestation of the Divine.

I can see here, also, the reason why Jesus ever refused to rest his claim to be heard on the physical wonders he was able to work. I can see why he met the eager multitude that ran after him to see a miracle, with the half impatient reproach: "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." Signs and wonders could not be the

evidence of God he sought to give them. I can see why he hurled the charge of depravity and sensuality against this class with such vehement energy: "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign." Their inward eye was so dark to divine light, their souls were so buried in the senses, that spiritual things must be materialized to find any entrance to their hearts. His claim rested on the inherent and eternal authority of the truth; and his appeal was made directly to the universal receptivity in truth-loving souls, which does not need to be assaulted and forced by any startling physical displays. "He that hath ears to hear let him hear," is the refrain that runs through all the solemn music of his utterances. The ear that is healthfully true will not miss the meaning of the sound in my words of truth. God's voice is not so uncertain that it need be mistaken. The healthy appetite knows its own bread. The true soul knows its own kin.

I can see, further, that those discoveries in ancient literature, and the criticisms on the Sacred Scriptures which they compel us to make (noticed at length last Sunday), showing, though they do beyond question, that we are not and never can be sure of the miracles recorded in the Bible as veritable historic facts, will bring no loss, but a positive gain, to religion. To the superstition that bases the truth on miracles it will seem the inevitable ruin of Christianity. To the faith that rests on the eternal authority which is in the truth itself, just where Christ rested his claim, it will touch nothing at all that is of the

least value. It will bring help. It will throw off an incubus that was threatening to stifle the life and power of the truth. It will leave us free to drop the vexing questions that were keeping the mind in perpetual hesitation and uncertainty, and turn to those indubitable truths that take hold upon the life and duties of the hour. Christianity will start forward on a new career of power, disentangled from the subtle webs of dogma and superstition, when this view comes to prevail—as prevail it will.

Furthermore, we have but to reflect a little to see that the view which regards the Divine Government as carried on by a series of miraculous interpositions and interferences with nature is unfortunate (to use no stronger word), in its influence on the mind. It unbalances its poise, unsettles its rest, unsteadies its trust. Observe, and you will see that this has been its effect. For ages men have thought of God as creating the world by a turn of the hand, and then as throwing each new form of life into it by a miraculous act, and at last as finishing a full-grown man out of the dust, between sun and sun. Now that the demonstrations of science have scattered all this, we see how much grander and more worthy of deity is the view which sees him creating in the method of law—with a slow progress, it is true, advancing through ages of ages, but in a sublime order that is radiant along its whole line with infinite wisdom and skill and love. In the same way, men have conceived of the moral government of God as inaugurated and carried on by broken

and convulsive manifestations of the divine power. All along its course God is seen as flinging miracles out of the sky before the startled eyes of men, and at last crowns this system of irregularities with a Being so entirely out of the order of nature and human life, that for eighteen hundred years he has been interpreted as setting science and religion, faith and reason, the heart and the head, God and nature, in antagonism with each other. So the whole moral administration of God has been turned into a series of special expedients. Regular order is lost sight of. The wholesome *sense* of such order, the basis of all stable principle in human character, is dissipated. The mind is stimulated with a prurient expectation of extraordinary and unnatural manifestations. Faith is thrown off its poise of trust in the ever present One, and demands wonders. Christian effort grows jerky and spasmodic. All reliance on the regular, educating forces of religion is broken. And religion itself too often becomes a pitiful oscillation between the frantic, fevered activities that spring from the imagination of special divine interpositions, and the sluggish apathy that grows over reaction and disappointment. The religious community is put in much the same state of mind with the citizens of a government whose legislation is capricious, and regulated by no fixed principles. The wonder in every mind is what the legislators will be about next. Nobody can tell. Nobody knows what to do. The only certain thing is the universal uncertainty and lack of confidence. Such

is the feeling when the methods of divine manifestation are regarded as incalculable, and out of all established order. When we shall consent to see that God's moral administration is as regular, and as free from the touch of special expedients and interferences as his physical creation, we shall begin to feel its Divinity. Its mighty uniformity will tell us it is of God. No deceiver can mimic the universe, nor put in a section that fits and fills a place as a part of the creative whole. We shall be able to trace the unity of God's self-manifestation in creation and Christ, the unfolding of his purpose from the monad to the man, from the man in his moral infancy to THE MAN in the divinity of his perfection; and then on still in the work begun and going slowly forward, and that shall never cease till all the families of the earth, now torn apart and warring with each other, shall be gathered under the power of that harmonizing perfection into the *one united family of God*.

But some philosophic thinker may here object, "In thus representing God as intimately and inseparably *in* nature, in the present energy of all her forces *now*, you identify the Deity with nature, and even with matter." No; I do not even raise that question. As to whether creation is of one, or of dual, or of manifold substance, I have nothing to say. I simply identify the forces of nature with the present direct *manifestation* of God. One thing is certain—God either is or is not *in* matter. If he is not, then matter cannot be inert. It must bear in its atoms

some inherent principle or power of action. In that case, the materialists would seem to have the advantage of us. Who could say but that principle might, if we could fully comprehend it, account for all the forms of existence with which we are acquainted? Who could say that the atom did not make the universe, as Lucretius claims, "without the meddling of God?" But if God is *in* matter, then have we full warrant for what I have assumed touching his direct manifestation in nature. I claim that God is the Builder of the physical universe, and that he holds every part and atom of it under direct, eternal, perfect control—that is all. I no more identify him with the creation than I identify the engineer with the engine that he builds and runs.

But this impressive inference does follow, beyond question, from the view here taken of God as being *in* nature. We are ever dealing directly with him in our life here on earth. He is not afar off. He is not a Being whom we are to meet and settle with hereafter. He settles with us every moment. What we feel here and now is his continuous, unvarying administration. We feel his touch in nature. He is in all her forces. He is in their laws of action. They are the laws of his action. All the results they work out are of his appointment. He is in the pleasure of every taste that nature gives us. He is in the pain of every nerve. Both are the expression of his will. Both come in the immutable order or system of things which he has arranged, and which he upholds and impels,

knowing from the beginning, and at every stage of its advance, every minutest effect that would spring forth from its ongoing. All that comes into our experience in the line of nature's forces and laws, whether agreeable or the reverse, whether of joy or of pain, is to be referred directly to him from whose WILL these forces stream forth, and these laws derive their sanction. What we feel through them is God putting his laws in force. If there be a God, it must be good philosophy, as well as good faith, which teaches that in "him we live and move and have our being." It must be true that we are to regard ourselves as dealing directly with him in all that comes to us in the fixed order of nature.

Then, finally, this way of thinking forbids the anticipation of special divine interpositions *in the future*, either to reward or punish. God's immutable order will go on. We have seen the mistake that looks back upon his past administration as a series of such interpositions, stepping aside to attain ends that could not be reached in the appointed order of things. This is the parent of that artificial conception of the divine government, as ruinous to human conscience and morals as it is to faith, that expects our future of good or evil to be made by special interferences and arbitrary acts of God. Its heaven is a toy with which the Great Father will make his good child happy. Its hell is a whip of flame, or some form of pain *inflicted*, with which he will forever scourge the nerves. The immutable connection between the life and the con-

dition which makes the good or the evil, the joy or the pain, the inevitable retributions of law, are lost sight of. The feeling grows into the soul that God can give us just what he pleases, and as he is good he will heap joys upon us, no matter what our moral condition has grown to be. This violence to reason and order must be stayed. It turns religion into a curse, instead of making it the life of the world. Every act of to-day goes into our moral condition—bettering it, if the act be good; lowering it, if the act be evil. Its effect is instantaneous. The very doing throws its change into the condition. Its consequences run forward into the future, because that condition remains and grows better or worse according as we go on to act well or ill. *We shall have what we can have* in the state we make *in* ourselves. The award in kind and degree is meted out by forces as invariable and inevitable as the magnetism that turns the needle to the pole. No interposition can change at will that interior growth of the soul shaped under the hand of bygone years, any more than it could change a fiend into an angel. And that condition is our heaven or our hell.

A Progressive Creation the Type of a Progressive Revelation.

Romans 1: 20: For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.

God is seen in nature. The works reveal the Worker. Natural religion, whose interpreter is reason, makes this assertion. The Life at the heart of nature flushes the face of creation. Reason finds God as creator, and learns not only *that* he is, but something of *what* he is, from what he does. This is the purport of the text.

When the claim is advanced that the Bible is also a revelation of God still more clear and inspiring, it is met with objection. Some portions of the Book are admitted to be worthy of a divine origin. Nothing purer in morality or grander in aim lies on the page of literature. But other portions wear a strange look—such crude statements; such puerile exactions; sometimes such cruel and bloody sentiments and commands—it seems a sacrilege to attribute anything emanating from the same source with these to God's inspiration. The Book seems like the mythical figure of the ancient imagination, which presents the perfect face and form of a man above, but runs into the legs and claws and tail of a dragon below. We

like the face, but object to the continuations. We think the creature cannot be of God's creation.

I have made it plain that many of these absurdities may be accounted for as the invention of writers who lived centuries after the characters whom they pretend to represent. Yet with this admission, and after all the allowances it demands are made, I have claimed, and do claim, that the evolution of a perfect and universal religion can be traced in the histories and teachings of the Bible. In the coarse but rich soil of the primitive Jewish mind the divine seed germinated; there took root, sprang up, and grew, till it gave the world its ripe fruit in the Person and Word of Jesus of Nazareth. Rough was the bark of the letter that enveloped and protected that growth, but nothing less than a divine life of truth within could have survived the wear and shocks of that history, and risen to such a splendid and beneficent maturity. It may conciliate the objector's prejudices on the score of these uncouth imperfections of the letter, and pre-dispose him to search for the hidden treasure within it, if we can discover a clear parallel in this growth of Revelation out of the imperfect into the perfect, with that evolution of creation where Paul and human reason unite in testifying that the eternal Power and Godhead are seen to be at work. This will be the attempt of the present discourse.

A century and a quarter ago, Bishop Butler gave the world his immortal "Analogy of Revealed Religion to the Constitution and Course of Nature." He traced in the

“facts of creation and natural Providence” a close parallel with the worst looking features objected to in the Bible. He then drew the patent inference that if these observed facts do not require us to deny that creation is the work of God, the matters so entirely like them in the Sacred Scriptures are not a valid reason for rejecting them as containing a revelation of God. But in the good Bishop’s day the habit of mind was to regard the whole creation as a mechanical product of Almighty Power, begun and finished within the six working days of our calendar week. There was hardly a dream of that long process going on through uncomputed ages, and by the orderly working of natural forces, which it is the glory of our later science to have demonstrated. This opens the way, I am sure, for tracing a profounder and more wonderfully convincing analogy between *a progressive creation and a progressive revelation*. The former will appear as a marvelously distinct type of the latter. The God who is moving step by step towards a clearly defined result in the one, is seen advancing in like steps toward an equally definite aim in the other. The process and the consummation both reveal the presence and purpose of the same comprehending Mind.

I. Let us turn, first, to the facts of creation. God begins with the lower and ruder forms, and gradually advances to the more perfect. The process is written with sunbeams everywhere through the leaves of nature. He begins with matter “without form and void.” He slowly

reduces the chaos to order and beauty for the home of life. In this process, matter is thought to have been at first a mere "star mist," diffused widely through space. Then it is condensed into a fluid ball. Afterward, it is brought into solider cohesion as rock and clod. Then as chemical and magnetic forces begin their play, the crystal, the gem, and every other mineral form of use and beauty takes shape. When the earth is ripe for such a new form of being, vegetable life starts forth—first in the lowest forms, as kelp, lichen, and moss, afterward rising into the grandeurs of the forest, and offering seeds and scions that may be cultivated into the lovely growths of our gardens. When the dwelling is ready and provisions stored, animal life appears, the full maturity of its lowest known form seeming but an inorganic drop of gum or jelly. From this humble beginning the creation advances through rising grades and orders of life, until man appears and is crowned as "Lord of Creation"—the end toward which creative Wisdom in all that preceded was approaching.

Do not overlook one remarkable fact here, the highest proof of a controlling Intelligence in all this progress—the first and lowest animal forms dimly prophesy the last and highest. The idea of the highest is outlined in the lowest. The whole process struggles upward toward the realization of the ideal in the Creator's mind. But lest you shall accuse me of shaping these statements to suit a purpose, and not to mirror facts, let me ask you to call in as witnesses some of the first scientific minds of the world,

who have made the study of this department of nature a specialty. Professor Owen is confessed "supreme in his own special walk as a comparative anatomist." Let us first hear him: "The recognition of an ideal exemplar for the vertebrated animals, proves that the knowledge of such a being as man must have existed before man appeared. For the Divine Mind that planned the archetype also foreknew all its modifications. The archetypal idea was manifested in the flesh, under divers modifications, upon this planet long prior to the existence of those animal species that actually exemplify it." This is to the point. Next call Agassiz to the witness-stand. He opens his testimony with these remarkable words: "I have devoted my whole life to the study of nature, and yet a single sentence may express all that I have done—I have shown that there is a correspondence between the succession of fishes in geological times and the different stages of their growth in the egg—that is all." He means to say that if you place the egg of the highest species of fish under examination, and watch it from the first quickening of the "germ-spot" which your microscope reveals, to its complete development, you will read the history of the creation of fishes on our globe. The first stage of growth represents in form and condition the full-grown fish of the lowest grade; the next, a species one grade higher, and so on in just the order in which they appeared in the seas of our earth, as the places of their fossils in the geological strata clearly evidence. He modestly adds: "It chanced

to be a result that was found to apply to other groups, and has led to other conclusions of a like nature." It is really a discovery that is to the study of biological science what the Copernican theory was to astronomy; and if I mistake not, will be found to be even more fruitful of results in human advancement. It applies to the whole range of animal life. There is a close resemblance between the lower orders of each type, radiate, mollusk, articulate, and vertebrate, and the embryo stages of growth in the higher species of that type. Of this Agassiz says: "They truly reveal the unity of the organic conception, of which man himself is a part, and mark not only the incipient steps in its manifestation, but also with equal distinctness every phase in its gradual realization. They mean that when the first fish was called into existence, the vertebrate type existed as a whole in the creative thought, and the first expression of it embraced potentially all the organic elements of that type up to man himself." An organic prophecy, or anticipative idea, of God. The German naturalist Oken, speaks the same thing in the terse sentence, "Man is the *sum total* of all the animals." In another work, Agassiz says again of this progressive creation: "It is evident that there is a manifest progress in the succession of beings on the surface of the earth. This progress consists in an increasing similarity to the living fauna, and among the vertebrates especially in their increasing resemblance to man." When he adds: "But this connection is not the consequence of direct line-

age between the faunas of different ages; there is nothing like parental descent connecting them; the fishes of the Palæozoic age are in no respect the ancestors of the reptiles of the Secondary age; nor does man descend from the mammals which preceded him in the Tertiary age;" I must think that he would have yielded to the accumulating evidence that the Creator brought these rising grades of life into existence under the law of genetic descent, had he lived a few years longer. This evidence is such that it has compelled the conviction of living scientists one by one, till hardly a single representative of any note stands for the opposed view. But he is in full accord with the Christian evolutionist again when he goes on to say of these progressive species of life, "The link by which they are connected is of a higher and immaterial nature; and their connection is to be sought in the view of the Creator himself, whose aim in forming the earth, in allowing it to undergo the successive changes which Geology has pointed out, and creating successively all the different types of animals which have passed away, *was to introduce man upon the surface of our globe. Man is the end toward which all the animal creation has tended from the first Palæozoic fishes.*" Well may Hugh Miller add: "These are extraordinary deductions. 'In thy book,' says the Psalmist, 'all my members were written which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there were none of them.' And here is natural science, by the voice of

two of its most distinguished professors, saying exactly the same thing."

The testimony to a *progressive and prophetic creation*, so far as there is now time to give, is before you.

II. Turn now to Revelation. We shall find in the Bible a similar course of progress and prophecy. We need not allow the objection that its earlier portions are un-historic to embarrass us. We are not looking for incidents of history, but for the progress of ideas, conceptions of God and man, and of the whole range of moral and religious obligation. Grant that the history was compiled in a later day and is in many of its incidents unreliable; in the very progress of ideas that can be traced through its course we have the proof that the writer was guided by some documents, or traditions, or inspiration that kept him essentially to the actual course of the human mind. It is hardly more supposable that a later imagination invented, purely out of its own conceits, the features of a great history, than that some great human genius devised the order of nature.

Begin with Genesis. What idea of God will you gain from the account of creation? Simply that he is a Being of creative power and order. No hint as yet of a moral attribute. In the story of the Fall, a dim sense of obligation appears. The Creator commands. The creature, made in his image, feels bound to obey. Fear and shame slink away to hide after disobedience. Right and wrong are faintly recognized—the most primary distinction es-

sential to a moral nature. It is the Palæozoic stage of the moral creation—the outline sketch only of the complete moral man. We discover little, if any, advance upon this until we come to the story of Abraham. Here I must think real history begins, though mingled largely with legend. The grand idea of the Patriarch to take his family away from the idolatry of his kindred and neighbors, and emigrate to a region where they would be isolated from the corruptions of a polytheistic worship, that he might found a nation devoted to the worship of THE MOST HIGH GOD—this is not in the style of the romancer. It is too large, too real. The story wears the colors of a real life. We need not affirm that Abraham was a monotheist, denying the existence of any other god. The time may have been too early for that. That he worshiped the *Most High* may have been a tacit admission that there were inferior gods. But the faith that stoutly refused to worship any other than the Most High, and felt assured that “the *Judge of all the earth* would do right, and that he would ultimately give possession of the earth to those who walked in his law of righteousness—this faith marks an era in the growth of religion. Abraham founded the worship that culminated in Christianity. He was justified by faith, and became “the Father of all them that believe.”

We may pass the story of Joseph as wearing a less authentic look, and as adding no new element of truth to the idea of God found in the faith of Abraham. We next

come to the great Lawgiver of Israel. An exile from the court of Egypt, in his solitary meditations among the awfully rugged mountains of the desert of Sinai, there comes over the soul of Moses a new sense of God's presence and being, figured as a "burning bush," and he feels as if he must put off his shoes from his feet, because the place on which he stands is "holy ground." The idea of the *Divine Holiness* has dawned. Here in this third chapter of Exodus the word "holy" first occurs. It is a sense of something higher, purer than anything ever distinctly conceived before. Right and justice have been held as a sort of commercial virtue, good for traffic, and in general for man's relations to his fellow man. Holiness turns the eye within upon what we are in secret thought and intention. It demands that these be such as to bear the scrutiny of the All-searching Eye. And henceforth the constant reiteration sounds in the ears of God's chosen people, "Be ye holy, for I am holy!" Notice the striking fact. Their highest conception of God's purity, righteousness, and perfection is here made the ideal for their own inward life. Their ideal of him might be imperfect, but it was the best their minds could shape. If there was anything they conceived as low, and mean, and wicked, they left that out of their idea of God. If there was anything transcendently excellent and good, they wove that in. "That ye must be," said the Prophet. There is no measuring the power of this law of self-discipline, this spiritual ideal to which they were taught that

they must conform even their secret thoughts. With this holiness of God particularized in the law of the "Ten Commandments," the nation started forth on its independent career. It took many generations to naturalize their wild blood under the divine law. With the people at large, it was never more than a partial success. Still there is a maturing of their thought of God, and a deepening of its influence in the life of the people to be traced through their history. In the stern equity of the Judges, in the tender songs of Psalmists, turning to human view the side of mercy in a holiness that was coming to appear too awful in its justice, in the visions of holy Prophets, withering idolatry and its corruptions with Jehovah's wrath, and picturing THE MAN and the glory that was to be—in all these the ideal of God's holiness is seen to be growing clearer and fairer. But not yet do we see the highest. It is only when we have passed through Law and Psalm and Prophecy, and come to THE MAN in whom all these are fulfilled, that the full glory of that which has been opening to our eyes through the ages, breaks upon us. Then the Divine Perfection is summed in one luminous word—*God is Love*. Jesus, "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his Person," directs us to look toward the Infinite Holiness and say "Our Father." "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." That is to say, "In my life of love and self-sacrifice and self-devotion to humanity, you see what God is to man. You learn the heart he bears toward you.

I am the Truth. I am the *Word* of God. He speaks to the world through me. In me you may rise to the highest idea of God and his relation to man." The closest study of Jesus and his words but serves to confirm this claim. We do learn the highest the mind of man has conceived and, so far as appears, can conceive of God in him. He stands commended even to science, in what he is seen to be, as the consummation of moral and spiritual evolution. As man is "the sum total of all the animals," so the Love of Jesus to humanity is the sum total of the divine virtues. He crowns and completes the moral and spiritual revelation of God, as the physical man crowns and completes the material creation. Both are alike the culmination of a long, gradual, progressive evolution.

III. Let us now gather up some of the suggestions which this instructive parallel offers.

It appears that Divine inspiration just keeps pace with the growth of the human mind. The first truth given is very rudimentary, because human faculties are yet very rudimentary. God develops a mind capable of a full inspiration before he gives the absolutely perfect truth. There is no evidence of a verbal communication of truth from Heaven to man above the grade of faculty he had attained, or beyond the stage of advancement he had at a given time reached. The Spirit works *in* and *through* man's faculties, not upon them from without. The choice of the Jewish race as the channel through which a perfect Revelation should be evolved and given to the world is

not to be conceived as arbitrary, or without reference to their inherent adaptability to that end. The *Genius* of that race, if I may so speak, was religious. Spiritual insight dwelt within them in a peculiar degree, and rose in their exalted Seers to an open vision of divine reality. This is no theory. It is the affirmation of facts. Just as certainly as the genius of the old Roman mind gave the world the highest principles of civil law and human justice, and the Greek mind the highest principles of art, just so certainly did the Jewish mind, inspired of Heaven, give the world the highest conception of God and the principles of religion. Compare the great religions of the world, evolved through other races, with the Christianity of Jesus, the ripe fruit of the long growth in the Jewish mind, and there is hardly room for two opinions on this point. The immeasurable superiority of his religion will stand confessed. But we need not therefore assume the infallibility of every inspired mind. The Spirit can surely inspire without making infallible. It would be regarded as a strange absurdity to claim that God could not aid a man at all to do right without making him perfect. The Spirit helps the African Bushman, no doubt, in his rude and feeble efforts to do well when he is tempted to do ill, but that help does not make him an angel. God does not raise the newly-converted savage at once into the keen sense of holiness felt by an Edwards, inheriting generations of Christian culture. Why can he not inspire one to *see* and *speak* the truth according to degree

of capacity without making one infallible, as well as he can aid a man to *do* the truth without raising him at once to perfection. The assumption of infallibility in every inspired writer, without any regard to his stage of knowledge or development, has been the source of infinite mistake and confusion. It seems to me no less absurd than to claim infallibility for the Pope. The Scriptures set up no such claim for themselves. They plainly and repeatedly declare, on the contrary, that their earlier portions were imperfect; that they contained laws given on account of the hardness of the hearts, or rude stage of development in the people; that a better law was needed, because the earlier was not perfect. Why press a claim for them which they explicitly reject?

It will appear, then, that the perfection of Revelation must be judged by the final result, not by what is seen at the crude beginning, or at any stage of its unfinished progress. We look to Christ, not back to Moses, for the religion God meant to give the world. Is Christ what we need? That is the only question we have to settle. You say the early story is full of puerilities—the eating of a forbidden apple, the silly doings of old patriarchs, the tedious ceremonial of worship, smearing garments, furniture, the tip of the right ear and right toe with blood, the charm attached to the color, age, and condition of the sacrifice to be slain, the nice specification of the parts to be used, the burning upon the altar, as if God were a Being to be pleased with the smell of roast meat. What

nonsense, you say, to imagine that the Almighty ever demanded or stood upon such punctilios of form, such child's play, as these! Enough to answer that the race was in its childhood. Do you ask the gravity and wisdom of sixty from the child of ten? Will the learned Professor despise the blocks and counters and letters of the Kindergarten because he finds them no longer helpful to his studies? Would you banish Santa Claus, and toys, and all the "puerilities" of Christmas from the world because you have grown too wise to find any use or pleasure in such trifles? But you say, "God was as wise when Moses wrote the ceremonial as when Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount." Certainly. But man was not; and God inspires according to what there is in man to be inspired. The light grows with capacity, no faster. Childlike methods for childlike minds—adaptation—that is God's law of educating man, as it is the true law of educating everywhere. Your objection strikes creation just as hard as it strikes Revelation. Take one of the lower forms of animal life, the oyster, for example. You turn it over and view its shapeless rudeness on every side, and then exclaim, "Could an all-wise God have made such a thing as that, and with the perfect idea of man in mind? Preposterous!" But, my friend, remember that you are here dealing with facts. God did make that thing, if he ever made anything—made it with the perfect idea of man in mind; made it as one of the progressive steps in that creative order by which he was advanc-

ing toward his final and most perfect creature, man. Will you now rule God out of creation because he made a mollusk before he made a man?

God's progressive creation is perfect only in its adaptations. He fills the earth with happy forms of life, of an increasingly higher organization, just as fast as it is ready to receive them. He never hurries forward a sensitive life into conditions that would torture and destroy. Its home is first made ready. It is only after countless generations of lower creatures have enjoyed their day, and unmeasured ages of change have ripened the earth for his home, that man appears. If he had come earlier, it would have been only to perish. God knows his time. So with the revelation of himself in the Spirit. His *Word* just keeps pace with the powers of man. No truth breaks from the lips of seer, lawgiver, poet, prophet, or angel from heaven, till there is an ear to hear, and souls ready to receive and preserve. The Sermon on the Mount lives because there were hearers in whom it could live. Earlier it would have been lost on the air. "In the fullness of time," Christ came. Earlier he could have founded no kingdom of heaven on earth. The perfection of the earlier Revelation was in its adaptation to the age and the people; the perfection of the final Revelation is in its sufficiency for universal man at his best attainment. By that let it be judged.

The first and rudest fish was the prophecy of man, says Agassiz. The first and rudest man was the prophecy of

Christ. "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." The higher moral and spiritual life within him shall yet bring the animal nature into subjection. You say the prophecy is dim. So was the prophecy of man in the fish. But the patience and the power of God brought it to fulfillment. Omnipotence could not be defeated. The creative forces could not stay till they had reached the predetermined end. No more can the divine Wisdom and Love stay till they have reached the *perfect man*. The moral forces move under the same irresistible Will as the natural. The spiritual evolution will as certainly complete itself as the material. The one Creator is in both; one purpose runs through all. The divine ideal must be realized. Behold it in the Christ—behold THE MAN! And in him, O man, discover your own better self. He is the prophecy of what humanity was created to become. Feel the inspiration of that prophecy. It is for you. You are the heir of all the creative ages. Head of God's creation, Image of his being, gifted with the powers of eternal progress, it rests with you to say whether you will be the perfection you see in the Christ. In the early stage of the moral creation now, it doth not yet appear what you shall be, but you shall be like Him, if you will. God's love in him beckons you upward. Let every day carry you higher—the senses mastered, the passions conquered, better purposes formed and fulfilled, nobler thoughts kindled, nobler aims cherished, Christ-like deeds done—so on and up along the path of limitless ascent.

The Human Nature of Jesus.

John xiv: 6: Jesus saith unto him, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me.

The human soul, groping under the mysteries of life, needs above all things a friend and guide whom it may trust absolutely. It is a child crying in the dark. It is away from home, bewildered, and unable to find its way. You and I need no other witnesses of this than ourselves. Ten thousand times, perplexed with questions of duty or faith, have we breathed the wish, "O that I knew! that some one would tell me what to think and do, so as to leave on me no tremor of doubt or hesitation!" Our longing in such moments asks the questions that are perpetual in human life. Every new generation repeats them. The intellect never relieves, never outgrows this perplexity. The larger human knowledge grows, the deeper the anxiety in these questions of faith and duty in religion. Not the savage, but the wisest of thinkers, puts them in the deepest doubt and intensest earnestness.

Now Jesus comes to us, to the race, this crying child in the darkness, and says, "Follow me; I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; I will lead you home! No man cometh unto the Father but by me." Can we trust him? There are millions of witnesses to testify that we can; that when we yield him the absolute faith he invites, we

find in him that which justifies our trust; light rises on our darkness; our questions are answered; we know that we have found our way home.

I invite you this morning to join me in the contemplation of his life, if perhaps we may discover what it is in him that inspires this confidence. Is it the instinct of truth in all souls that recognizes in him the true Leader and Head of humanity? I have claimed that he is *the perfect Man*. Let us see whether our view of him will approve this claim? If a Creator and Divine Purpose are in that evolution of life from the lowest form up to man, which we trace in nature, and are growingly manifest in that new course of intellectual, moral and spiritual evolution, which we trace in human history, was not a perfect man to have been expected? Can God's self-manifestation stop short of the most complete expression possible? The faith which sees God as present in nature will have no sneer for such a question. My own conviction is that the scientific historian will yet recognize facts in ancient races of men which will make it clear that the highest form of human character and life was to have been anticipated to appear among the people of the Jews. But setting aside such considerations for the present, I turn your attention to the Fact that has appeared. Well might we with the ancient Cynic go forth into the streets, lighted candle in hand, in quest of a *man*, if the search only promised success. The philosopher would have been less laughed at, perhaps, if the tremendous want his act expressed were

only felt. A *perfect man* is the highest need of our race. If he comes, he cannot fail to be the light of the world. In the fact embodying in living reality before our eyes all that goes to make up a perfect humanity, in proportions that exclude defect, we see what we ought to be, what are our true relations to God and to our fellow men. There is the reality. The whole range of human duty is illuminated by such a presence. Conscience responds to the light. Virtue realized, impersonated, lived, binds us as a law. We cannot exclude the sense of obligation to be the practical worth it reveals. Shape ever so perfect an ideal *in words* and it bears no such impression to the conscience. It is a fiction, the creation of some brilliant imagination. It may not be practicable. The critic may riddle it with his censures. It cannot speak with authority. Place the reality of perfection before us, and we know it is practicable. The critic's occupation is gone. His shafts rebound and drop harmless at the feet of a flawless integrity. It speaks with the authority of eternal truth.

I do not propose any formal argument to prove the perfection of Jesus. The German Dorner and the American Bushnell have attempted this. If you will read their words, I think you will confess their strength. But arguments of this kind depend very much upon the hearer. His moral quality and prejudices go far in shaping their impression. The *personal* factor is a large one in the equation. It is sure to appear in the answer. The most irresistible evidence is the man himself. Perfection needs

no certificate. It commends itself. Virtue is the strongest argument for virtue. The best sermon on living is a good life. And it is to this instinctive sense of perfection that the life of Jesus appeals. His enemies are constrained to confess the beneficence of his deeds and the marvelous symmetry of his character. The fact that the sharpest hostile eyes, after a search of eighteen hundred years, have not been able to fix a material blemish upon him, is one of the strangest in history. His astonishing pretensions have been the ground of the most serious charge—and it is true that he announces aims of a wider scope, looking to an empire over men and human affairs more absolute than military conqueror ever conceived—yet when we scrutinize those aims, we find them of such a nature, and pursued in such a temper, that we do not even think to accuse him of egotism. There is not even the suggestion of a selfish ambition in them. The empire of truth in the soul of man is what they contemplate, and we would as soon quarrel with men for breathing the atmosphere lest they should exhaust the supply, as set up a serious resistance to such purely spiritual claims.

But what I desire you to especially notice, is that in spite of his apparent assumption of superiority, and with all his grandeur of character, he awakens the feeling that we can and ought to be like him. His character is imitable. His virtues are home virtues. What he does is done in relations to God and man that are common to us all. We are moving in essentially the same sphere of action.

Our duties, not in particular act but in essential spirit and quality, are the same as his. We can speak his words. We can radiate the cheer of his sympathy. We can grow weary in ministries to the sick and needy. We can practice his forbearance. We can deny self for the welfare of others. And when he promises his disciples that they shall sit on the throne of divine power with him, we may well feel that it is no extravagance of enthusiasm or play of rhetoric. We can all master temptations as he did, if we will. We can all get the victory over our own passions—the most honorable of all victories—"Greater is he that ruleth his own spirit than he that taketh a city." We can all put on the royal purple of a divine righteousness—a royalty that turns the crown of the greatest empire of earth into a bauble in comparison. The kingdom he promises is the reign, in God, over self, and all forms of worldly enslavement—a throne which countless millions can share as well as one. The greatness of Jesus is available to us, to all. It is wholly on the plane of common life. And here, if I mistake not, is the hiding of his power over men.

But you say, we cannot work miracles. No; and no matter! What part of the following him which he invites would working miracles be? What would it add to perfection of character if the power were divinely conferred on us? Jesus made very little of his own miracles. They were but an incident to his work. He deprecated rather than courted public notice of them. He knew how shal-

low all the impression they could possibly make on the moral life must be. His real greatness seems belittled or obscured, rather than enhanced, by dwelling on his miracles. And the sooner the glamour of the superuatural, which the reports of these have thrown around his person, is dispelled, the sooner will the minds of men turn from what is essentially insignificant in his life, a factitious reputation, to what he really was—a greatness which belittles all miracles.

We may imagine that if men could see in Jesus those special forms of human greatness which the world most admires, it would greatly increase his power and extend his influence in human affairs. But consider where this would place him in relation to your real need. You admire the military hero. The poet sings his exploits. The historian extols his genius. When he comes to Oakland, you close your shops, and stores, and offices, and decorate your streets and houses for a great gala-day in honor of him. But can you imitate the hero? Does his life answer your deepest questions? Is his greatness available for your want? After you have feted and feasted him, and seen all of human glory that his life can reveal, you go home to find yourself, with reference to your life's doubts and duties, just where you were before. No light on your darkness; no help under your burdens. So with the great inventor in mechanics, the discoverer in science, the thinker in philosophy, the poet, orator, or statesman. These may amaze you with the displays of their power,

but the more their greatness makes you wonder, the farther is it from your want. It takes them out of your sphere. They cannot be your leader. You cannot follow them. But when you turn to Jesus you find your leader. You can follow him. His qualities are thoroughly human, and quite within your reach,—not so coldly grand that you despair of ever climbing their frosty heights. A winning sense of faultlessness comes over you as you trace his life. His virtues are divine; yet you feel that it is within the compass of your powers to transcribe and make them your own.

And the simplest view we can take of him will best meet the wants of heart and life. He has been studied too much under the refracted and colored light coming through some ingenious theory. The theorists have created an imaginary want that the heart does not really feel, and then constructed a theoretical Savior to meet that want, thus turning both the Savior and the salvation into fictions of their imagination—as when they tell us that our sin is infinite in potential evil, hence must be matched by an infinite penalty; or if forgiven, expiated by an infinite sacrifice, even the very Deity incarnate; all of which no heart would have ever dreamed as its real want if it had not been mystified by the theory. It is as if one should come to us in a cave or dark room and insist that we must accept their theory of light before we could enjoy the benefit and blessing of the rays that fall from the sun. To stop over the theory but detains us from action,

and postpones the benefit. Come out into the sunshine! Never mind the theory! Let one tell us that we are spiritually ignorant and dark, and need a teacher, weak, and need a helper, sorrowful, and need a comforter, sinful, and need some one who can lead us back to right and duty and peace, he speaks to a want we feel. His voice finds an echo in our own consciousness. Let us study the Man of Nazareth as he moves before us in the ordinary relations of life, and see if we do not find in him provision for our felt need. Come into the sunshine!

Look at him in his religion. A perfect man will stand perfect in his relation to God. He cannot ignore that relation; can neither sink below nor exaggerate the proper fervor of its love and measure of its service. In him we should see what is the normal relation of every soul to God. Those who assume the perfection of Jesus, therefore, would naturally approach his religion as a sort of holy place, a "burning bush," in the presence of which we should reverently put off our poor human modes and stand in awe. Yet no sense of a ghostly and supernatural awfulness falls upon us as we see him in his inter-communion with heaven. He rather makes us feel that religion is the native element of man. It is a *home* spirit. His religion is so thoroughly human and on a level with our own thoughts and feelings, that we can welcome it in the household, and make it the companion of our business. It was a first truth in his teaching that the true life of man is in God, his strength in simple faith; that if he

would be entirely himself, or know the truth, he must "dwell in God and God in him," through that Spirit that guides into all truth. His own life was this teaching realized. It was a life of faith, a walking with God. While we are apt to think of him as a being superior to the need of prayer, I believe it is oftener noted of him that he prayed, than of any other character named in the New Testament. Luke tells us that when he was about to utter the Sermon on the Mount, he went up into the mountain, and was all night long in prayer. Again, "he was alone with his disciples praying." He prays at the grave of Lazarus. He closes his dying counsels to "the Twelve" at the last supper with a prayer that reads like a face to face talk with God. Then thrice in Gethsemane, thrice again on the cross, do we hear his voice in prayer. On every occasion that presses his spirit he turns to God for light and strength. Indeed he walks through the world as if the heavens stood open above him, and the angels of God were ever visible to his eye ascending, and descending the ladder of communication between earth and heaven. The nearer to God the more of prayer, is the lesson of his life. Yet there is no trace of the ascetic, the monk, in him; no hyper-spiritualism, no strain to keep up the mood of devotion. His religion sets naturally upon him. He does not abandon the world. He is a man among men. He partakes freely of the good cheer of the feasts to which his friends invite him, with never a hint or suspicion that the temperate enjoyment of such good

things was an enemy to the soul or the foe to spirituality. The most divinely spiritual and unworldly of all religions, his is nevertheless pre-eminently for this earth, for man, for *all men*, in every calling, temptation, or condition in life.

Look at him in his mighty purpose to save men from evil and raise them to a divine life—his inauguration of the kingdom of God among men. One is not so much struck with his practical benevolence—unceasing providence of love and relief to all forms of human want though his life was—as with a certain divine exaltation of soul seen in him in his feeling toward the race. His majesty of manhood is here simply Godlike. It is the bearing of an infinite Patience and Love.

There is danger to most men in taking up a work of reform. The constant dwelling upon some aggravating shape of wickedness, worries the temper. Indignation grows personal. The reformer often comes to hate the sinner rather than the sin. He becomes such that he needs another reformer to set him right. Now no man ever had more to irritate him than Jesus; yet no one ever bore a sunnier temper in the very radiance of prosperity and human favor. Never a tone of petulance in his words, no vitriolic sarcasm flung upon the bare nerves of the erring; no flush of anger in his face; no spasmodic outburst of rage that would brush away wrong-doers as if they were worthless and annoying insects, with one wrathful sweep of the arm. His self-possession is never

ruffled. When his indignation does flash forth, it is as purely impersonal as the feelings of the judge in sentencing the criminal. Toward those who err in judgment, or sin through weakness, he shows a patience and tenderness that speaks the mother toward her erring children, rather than the hard censor of evil-doers.

His sublime steadfastness in his aims for human welfare is equally noteworthy. There is no source of inspiration and strength for a good purpose struggling with obstacles like this granite immovability seen in him. Those who take any great interest of humanity on their hearts must expect to have the moral force and stamina in them tried to the utmost. If they anticipate popular favor and an easy time, they had better not begin. We see society full of discouraged reformers and despondent workers for truth and human progress. They are found in our churches, our Sunday-schools, our temperance societies, our benevolent organizations, our good causes of every name—as they have ever been found, thick as summer butterflies that turn to autumn skeletons, in every good cause that has fought its way through indifference and obloquy to triumph and honor. They mean well—these disheartened righteous! their sympathies are in the right direction; but their hearts are not stout in truth and love. Social prejudices are so perverted and so inveterate, men are so willfully blind, antagonists are so unreasonable, the friends of the right way are so lukewarm and so fickle, they conclude it is of no use, and they

had as well give up. Many a Christian minister, with Christ's Gospel in his hands, sometimes finds himself verging on this mood. But if ever he feels how little real *man* there is in him, what a thin, breeze-shaken reed he is, it will be when he notices this feeling rising in himself and then turns to the life of Jesus. There he sees one struggling with difficulties compared with which his are but an ant-heap to the Sierras, unfaltering through every reverse, gathering new force out of the very conditions of despair, and all because he has a manhood large enough to grasp and feel the divinity there is in the truth, and the possibilities that slumber in erring human souls—all because he *loved* men well enough to make him so great. He stands with the truth, come favor or come ruin. Before that sight one grows ashamed of his littleness and vacillation, and even greedy of self-sacrifice for the truth's sake. His great love, unconquerable in its hopefulness, threw over the weak and sinful the glory of their possible future in the grace of God, and veiled in light the imperfections that clung around them for the moment. Not as they are does he see them, distorted with passion and stained with sin, but radiant in the beauty of holiness under the light of the great White Throne. Nothing can daunt his courage or damp his ardor. Persecution is his opportunity; reverses but stimulate him; defeat itself turns to victory for him. We all know how the mettle of a man comes out when his great plans meet rebuff, and the world turns cold. Weak men will then lie down and whine. Even

strong men, unless they be divinely strong, will turn silent. The mighty Napoleon, conscious that his vast schemes of ambition had nothing in them that men could wish immortal, and had met their death-blow, went staggering through the darkness towards Paris after his Waterloo, cursing his star that had shed baleful influence on the day, to live henceforth the morose, complaining life, and at last to die the miserable death of a disappointed and defeated man. Jesus sees the crowd drop suddenly away at a saying of his too radical for their traditional prejudices, to feel keenly the desertion, no doubt; to remember that his enemies will exult at this defection, and hasten to call the notice of the world to what a mushroom excitement his movement is showing itself to be, and to what insignificance his following has already dwindled; but to manifest no sign of despondency, or chagrin, or wavering in his purpose. He sorrowfully turns to the few who knew him best and asks, "Will ye also go away?" Gaining a reply of faithful adherence from them, he goes on in his work as calmly and firmly as if all the multitude and all the world were with him. And when the rabble that were but yesterday shouting their "Hosannah to the Son of David!" wishing to thrust a crown upon his head, turn suddenly around to-day and cry just as clamorously, "Crucify him, crucify him!" he faces their anger, and marches bravely on to his cross, knowing that his designs, built on immortal truth, will live all the more that his life falls a sacrifice.

View him in the light he sheds on humble position. The marvel is not that he began in a carpenter's shop and rose to a commanding station—it is that he was born, and lived, and ended life without once attaining a position that gave him influence by reason of the honor in which that position is held among men, and yet sent forth from his lowliness a power upon the world such as history has never felt from any other single life. Men are prone to attribute their failures or their personal insignificance to external circumstances. "Ah me!" they sigh, "if I only had the money of my neighbor who lives in the palace on the hill, I would make this arid desert of a world about me bloom like a garden. It is poverty that crushes me down. Poverty is the coffin of my buried aspirations!" But here is an example that throws suspicion on this complaint. Did Jesus have the money of your neighbor on the hill? Did he count life worthless or bare of opportunity because he was so poor that he had not where to lay his head? Did he give up trying to do God's good work because he could not rival Pilate or Herod or Cæsar in the splendor of his retinue and establishment? As you observe the peculiar power that streams forth from his life, will it not dawn upon you that possibly the poverty of which you complain as crushing you down may be the very circumstance which puts you at an advantage? You cannot depend on wealth or social eminence for your influence. Very well; the influence that emanates from these is rarely of a deep spiritual quality. Make yours

the power that streams from the heart to the heart in the living flow of duty and love, and you will discover that God has made *the man* to be more than his wealth or position. The life of Jesus was surely no failure because he had not large sums of money to take care of, nor the petty annoyances of rank or honors heaped on lofty station to take up his time. The true man, in the might of the in-dwelling God, lays his hand on adverse circumstances and asserts his superiority to all external disadvantages. Jesus demonstrates that power is not in the surroundings but in the man.

Look at him on the cross. A *perfect man* in suffering! The sight would at first seem to impeach both the justice and the goodness of God. Suffering is the penalty of sin, we say; yet here is one suffering beyond the measure of mortal agony, who is claimed to be "without sin." What does this mean? Set aside theory, and let the light of experience and universal fact fall on the sufferer, and you will see what it means. Is it not a fact as wide as sinless human goodness that the purest love suffers for its unworthy loved—the reformer and philanthropist for his degraded wards, the friend for his fallen friend, the mother for her wild, self-ruining scapegrace of a boy? The more saintly the innocence and purity, the keener will be the pain. The nobler and stronger and more divinely enduring the love, the greater will be its sacrifices, the more will it express itself in painful effort voluntarily undertaken in behalf of its objects. Strange fact! The very

intensity of love laying the good and the holy in this evil world under the moral necessity of the sharpest suffering! Strange to our earthly moods and selfish estimates of life's ends and uses; but not strange to a divinely taught heart. Ask this suffering love whether it wants any cold, calculating questions of justice raised in its case. Would it love less that it might suffer less? Would the philanthropist be a lower style of man that he might feel less keenly the miseries and follies of our human condition? Would the mother have her heart die toward her unworthy boy, that she might be spared her yearning struggles and prayers and weepings? Oh, insult not a holy love with such questions! It would shudder to think of descending to be lower or less than it is, though to remain and rise were to suffer a thousand times more. Such a love feels a worth in itself that is not to be balanced against any degree of pain. A sense of its own divineness and immortal life makes it strong to endure. It detects the shallowness and selfishness of the error that says pain is to punish sin; it learns from its own heart that the object for which a good God has appointed suffering is to rescue and raise up the sinner. There is something besides a hard-faced justice to be satisfied; its own yearning goodness *demands* the privilege of sacrifice that the fallen may be restored and become "partakers of the divine Holiness." Love must impart its gift. It cannot look upon the perishing that lack yet might receive, and remain at rest. It must go forth along whatever path of thorns

leads to the end, that it may bear to them God's gift of life.

This is the meaning of the sufferings of Jesus. They speak a love that could not withhold, but must go forth to "seek and to save that which was lost," "to save his people from their sins;" by its own self-expression to inspire in the saved its own life, and in that fact make them partakers of God's holiness. The cross is the key to the mystery of human pain. For although there is much suffering that is involuntary, and does not rise from love to others, yet its end in God's appointment is the same. It is to teach men the supreme value God places on spiritual good, holiness of character. It is to bring men into the same estimate; and when accepted in love never fails to bring forth "fruits unto holiness and the end, everlasting life." We often complain of the injustice of Providence. We say we suffer more than we deserve, It was but yesterday that one said to me, "In early life and for many years, I was prosperous and happy. I had enough of this world's goods. Life went smoothly with me. But a brief illness was followed by paralysis; and here I am, a helpless cripple; pain never lets go; sleepless nights followed by suffering days, and suffering days leading on to worse-suffering nights; my money gone; my plans defeated; my hopes blasted; nothing in prospect but one dreary waste of suffering and want; and yet I live on. Why can I not die? I find it hard to believe there is a God while I am doomed to suffer in this way."

Bitter indeed seemed the lot of that sufferer. I could only reply from the cross: "Is your life blasted? Is the great end for which you are here on God's fair earth certainly defeated? Think of some who have never met your misfortune. Prosperity continues unbroken. Health never wavers. Life runs smoothly. They have more than heart could wish. But as life goes on, what do they become? Pampered pets of the world; sleek, comfortable animals, too often; with never a thought for the soul; never an aspiration towards a diviner life. And when they come to the end, look at what they are, what their favored life has made of them. Would you change? You would not be they for a thousand worlds! What they miss you may have in spite of your pains, may by the help of your pains, through trust in God. Think not your life is blasted; its main good, its only good that would not soon perish at the longest, is still within your reach. Accept the pain that must be, as Christ accepted his cross, and having suffered with him you shall reign with him." As this thought came like a divine revelation to the sufferer, a new light suddenly rested on that pain-weary face, and the sufferings which had been such a black mystery seemed glorified. We shall never complain that we suffer more than we deserve when we stand under the light of the cross.

So, finally, view this one who comes to you and offers himself as a Leader and Friend in the darkness of life in every possible aspect. Compare him with all others who have claimed to do the world the same service; know the

best that each can do for you; concede freely all the good there is in them; and then say if your highest reason does not compel you to admit that Jesus stands peerless in the manifest glory of his excellence; see if your heart will not respond to his claims, "Oh thou Son of Man and Son of God, let others choose whom they will, but be *Thou my* heart's Leader and Lord, and let it be my dear privilege to follow thee, though it be with distant and faltering step, along the path of suffering and love which thou hast trod, leading unto everlasting life.

The Divinity of Jesus.

John xiv: 9: He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. John x: 30: I and my Father are one.

We speak of this world as the *home* of man; but we shall never dwell in it with any proper appreciation of its significance, until we learn to see it in the manifestation of God. Man is never *at home* until he "sees the Father" as the Builder of the house for him. To see the creation and not see the Creator is to look upon a dead mechanism and imagine it to be greater than the inventor. The brute crops the grass and sees nothing better in the sod from which it springs. The man who lives of the fruits of the earth and sees nothing but matter and its forces as their origin, is hardly above the brute in the dignity of his thought. Not to feel a throbbing Heart under the ribs of nature, not to recognize a thinking Mind in her order, not to trace an intelligent purpose in her ongoings and results, is to miss the chief significance of her works. It is to study nature as one dissects a corpse—after that which is of supreme interest, the life, the soul, is gone out of it. Matter would be a lifeless lump, and all the motions of nature but the random play of insensate forces, if God were not in them.

But once look upon creation as the manifestation of God, and you are in the way, if I have learned rightly, to the true interpretation of the Life and Person of Jesus—

of the claim he asserts that he is one with the Father, and that to see him is to see the Father. This is simply the claim that he is the fulness of that manifestation of God which we see opening more and more clearly throughout the whole course of creation. He is the consummate flower and fruit of the whole growth of nature, and of moral and spiritual life on our earth. He is the highest and completest manifestation of God that man can see or comprehend. Let us see if this cannot be made to appear.

One fact strikes the student of nature, as he reads the history of creation written in the strata of the earth, as significant beyond every other—the fact of progress. Nature begins in chaos and advances to *the cosmos*. She starts with the lowest forms of life and rises by gradual steps to the highest. To trace these steps is the work and the wonder of science. Beginning with the moner, or primitive germ of life, the advance is through ascending classes, orders, families, genera and species, till man crowns and completes the physical series. There are stationary forms, degenerate forms, even lower branches that nature suffers to die and drop off altogether from the growing tree of physical life; but there is a central stem that ever continues to rise. In man begins a new creation—moral and spiritual. This is characterized by the same law of growth. Beginning in the lowest savage, it advances through various forms and grades of cultivated humanity, until it culminates in the highest example of moral and

spiritual life that appears along the range of history. Here again there are stationary races, cases of arrested growth, like the Chinese, degenerate races, like the Greeks and Arabs, dead and buried civilizations, like the ancient Egyptians and Phœnicians; but there was one ancient stock whose growth can be traced from a very humble origin through a marvelous course of development, till it gave the world One whose peculiar and peerless personality and influence on human character and history have constrained the purest and loftiest minds of other races to confess him to be the impersonation of all excellence in moral and spiritual life—the Perfection of the new creation.

Now if we are to recognize a Creator in creation, if we are to say that this earth is a *manifestation of God*, it is impressively apparent that He is *increasingly* manifest in the progress we have traced. More and more of God is seen in these rising grades of life beneath man; more and more of God is revealed in the moral and spiritual life of humanity, in the succeeding higher types of men which the study of history brings to view. Then but admit that Jesus is the grandest and divinest of men—as Renan and Parker and Emerson agree that he is—and do you not by that admission confess in him the highest manifestation of God that has appeared on our earth? Study him under the severest scrutiny, and can you refuse to acknowledge in his manifest superiority, if not absolute perfection, his moral supremacy among men? For one, I am satisfied

that the facts which may be gathered from the ancient records of human life, combined with the view of THE MAN, furnish a moral demonstration that places him at the head of the human race, as conclusive as the scientific demonstration that man physical stands at the head of the lower orders of creation.

The Scriptures, then, have made no mistake in exalting him to the leadership of humanity. This thought seems to have possessed the Apostle Paul especially like a passion. To him Jesus was "God manifest in the flesh;" "The image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature;"—the image, as being the consummate manifestation of God; the First-born of every creature, not in time, of course, but in the idea of God, the final end of his creative self-manifestation. Again he says of Jesus, "God gave him to be Head over all things to the church;" and again that it was the Divine purpose "To gather together, (original, *head together*), in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth." The intuitions of the Apostle's faith thus caught the vision of the mightiest fact of creation; saw and felt the divine dignity in Jesus, by virtue of which he is the head of humanity. If I am not deceived, nature and history will ere long confirm this insight of faith with impregnable demonstration. In that demonstration, Science and Faith will join hands, never again to raise them in warfare against each other.

Another law observed in this unfolding manifestation

of God is deeply suggestive. The close scientific study of this progressive creation discovers that every higher form that appears epitomizes in its own structure and contents all the forms below itself. That is to say, along with some new distinctive quality that ranks it as higher, it contains within itself all the elements that go to make up the lower grades. The rock embodies all that is in the clod, and holds it together in a firmer cohesion. The crystal contains all that is in the rock, combined under some beautiful law of arrangement not seen in the rock. The vegetable contains the same coarse matter as the clod and the rock and the crystal, but deftly woven into an organism by a principle we call life, more wonderful far than the law which arranges the constituent particles of the crystal. The body of the animal, again, contains gross matter akin to dust, and also the vital principle, the same as the vegetable, but added to these, even in the lowest forms, a marvelous something we call instinct, which more than life, if possible, baffles all our analysis and science. And the more complex and highly organized animal structures, from the polyp up to man, ever include in themselves all the elements of matter and structure found in the forms below themselves. Man has an organic, living body and instinct like the animal, but joined mysteriously with these, and rising immeasurably above them, he bears the divine endowment of reason. In this is included a judgment that can discriminate the good from the evil, the right from the wrong, and a con-

science which can feel obligation. A creature has now appeared that can know himself, and in himself the image of God and the God whom his image reflects. He is the epitome of creation, representing the whole in himself all the way up from the clod to the rational soul.

It will be obvious to a little reflection that the moral and spiritual creation is pervaded by the same law as the natural. The higher include the lower. In the rising types of character, each nobler man cannot fail to combine in living illustration all the virtues of those below himself. If, therefore, it be true that in all the qualities that make man divine Jesus stands as the *preeminent man*, it is apparent by this law of assimilation and inclusion that he epitomizes and carries higher in his own person the whole manifestation of God in creation. By another line of evidence we have thus come to the same conclusion with Paul's faith. As we have heard the naturalist Oken, with this very law in view, exclaim, "Man is the sum total of all the animals," so we hear the apostle asserting with an equally startling boldness, that Jesus is "The fulness of the Godhead bodily." That is, he is the completeness of the Divine manifestation in nature and in man. In his human body he represents the entire physical creation; in his spirit the entire moral and spiritual creation; and thus crowns and perfects the manifestation of God.

If the view now presented be correct, it will be apparent at once that Jesus is no afterthought or side-thought of

God, brought in upon the course of evolution by miracle or separate divine act. He is seen as the final end and realization of God's aim in the long progress of self-revelation. We may regard nature and man as a system of object lessons through which God is revealing as much of Himself as can be revealed outwardly to the human soul. Jesus then will appear *by virtue of what he is seen to be* as the supreme manifestation of God. And when the theologians will consent to see him thus, as the crowning fact of creation or evolution, rising out of the creative forces that have been at work from the beginning, an integral and inseparable part of the system, illuminating the whole by opening to view in unspeakable grandeur the design and meaning of the whole, they will have an argument for his divine supremacy over the race as much more conclusive than those upon which they have hitherto relied, as it is nearer to God's known and visible methods of working. We cannot cut out and set aside a part or section in the system of nature through which God is manifesting himself, and put in its place some puny device of our own. What is put in by miracle we can imagine away without breaking the continuity of the whole; but what comes in by growth or evolution holds its place by virtue of eternal law. No more can we cut off and set aside the Crown and Head, and make it good by any human substitute. As well attempt to put out the Sun and substitute the electric light. Man is not competent for the work of God; and the work of God ap-

proves its origin by its divine greatness. The eternal forces of God, working in nature, place Jesus at the head of creation and of men; and you must reverse the work of God, the very order of nature, before you can unthrone him.

And do we miss anything from the fulness and authority of God's revelation in thus seeing in Jesus a part, and the *perfection*, of the whole system? The Christian evolutionist sees God in the creation of man by the long growth from the lowest form of life just as distinctly, and with fewer embarrassing questions, as when he thought of the first man as shaped from the clay of the earth by the mechanical act of God within twelve hours. So the Christian believer will see God in the Christ, regarded as the final and highest result of moral and spiritual evolution, just as fully and clearly, and with far fewer chilling shadows upon his reason and heart, as when he viewed him as a separate and miraculous attachment to the manifestation of God in nature and man. He sees in him the Father, and finds in him the way home. It is only a mild form of Atheism in the guise of Christian faith, failing to recognize God as ever present in nature, really seeing him in nothing at all, that insists on a mechanical creation of man and a miraculous Christ before it will see God in either.

We should find small edification now in entering into the long debate which has raged for sixteen centuries in the Christian church between those who teach the su-

preme Deity of Jesus on the one hand, and those who hold his creature dependence on the other, between those who insist on his essential *oneness of Personality* with the Father, and those who claim that the unity is only of spirit and purpose, between those who address an adoring worship to him as equal with the Father, and those who denounce such worship as addressed to a creature, and therefore as essential idolatry. Our view simply sets aside the controversy as nearly meaningless. The disputants set out from some baseless assumptions among their fundamental data, and hence have ever found it impossible to reach a stable and satisfactory conclusion. We say that the Supreme Deity comes forth from the mystery of the infinite into his *supreme manifestation* in Jesus. We see Him in Jesus. We know Him in our highest conception of what He is in himself and of what He is to man, in and through Christ. If you point me to the bodily form that went to and fro along the roads of Palestine about eighteen and a half centuries ago, and ask if I can believe that being of flesh and blood whom my eye can measure and the scales can weigh, to be the infinite God, I answer without hesitation, That body cannot be God; God is a Spirit; that body is matter, the same as any other human form. A limited form cannot be the infinite Spirit. If then you refer me to the Mind that dwelt in that body, that grew in wisdom and knowledge, and confessed ignorance of some things known to the Heavenly Father, and ask me if that mind is one and

co-equal with the infinite Mind, I can only answer again that Omniscience cannot grow in knowledge or confess ignorance; the finite cannot be the Infinite in the sphere of mind, any more than in the sphere of matter. If you remind me, again, that the Will which controlled that body and directed the powers of that mind, in the act of prayer confessed dependence and the need of help, and ask me if that can be one with the Omnipotent Will, I reply once more that the dependent cannot at the same time be the absolute Independent; the finite cannot be the Infinite in the sphere of will any more than in the sphere of matter or knowledge. To affirm that they are is sheer self-contradiction. It is merely to play with words; to amuse ourselves with impossible imaginations. Let us not impose upon our reason with palpable absurdities. If you once more ask me to open the mystery of the connection between the finite and the Infinite, and make clear the metaphysical relation of Jesus to the Father, I can only confess that as my powers are finite, and one of the factors of your problem is the Infinite, you have set me a task for which I am incompetent. I cannot grasp a unity in which I must still believe. This only seems important to my faith—I need to remember that all I can know of the Infinite must come to me in the finite. All I can see of God must be in his limited manifestations. Jesus appears as the supreme manifestation of the Father. To see him is to see the Father. I can worship God at all only under the conceptions I gain from his manifestation. I

cannot do otherwise, therefore, than worship Him in that thought of the Divine that Jesus gives me. As my eye ranges upward along the rising orders of life and being in which God has come forth into manifestation, the last and highest I see is the Man of Nazareth. When the search after God leaps beyond the thought of Him it there gains, the mind finds itself floating in a vague and limitless vacancy, where nothing is discovered upon which it can rest but its own imaginings. I turn from them as unsubstantial support. I am compelled to worship God through Christ. If I discard the conception of God that comes through him, I find myself projecting the fiction of my own brain into infinite space and worshipping that as God. I may call him Law, may call him Life, may call him Goodness, or by whatever other lofty abstraction human language supplies; but under all these names the sense of his *nearness*, of the reality of his *personal relation to me*, fades into dimness. When by faith I see in Jesus *the Father*, I recover the lost sense of that nearness and reality, and taste the "fruits of the Spirit" in the communion of prayer.

A truce, then, to controversy. It is time we begin to believe in Jesus practically. Whatever incomprehensible wonders we may believe *about* him, our faith will avail little until we believe *in* him for what we can see him to be. We need to look at him in his relation to our felt want. What light does he throw upon our life? What suggestions may we gain from him for our own improvement;

what help in the fight with conscious evils? What inspirations to higher aims and holier endeavors? He was named *Jesus* because he should save his people from their sins. To see the human beauty of his life, to call him Divine, and then turn away to plunge into impurities of self-indulgence, or to follow the law of selfishness in our work, or give ourselves up to all meannesses of motive and living, is only to prepare for ourselves the repulse at last, "I know you not." If we know him *by heart*, he will know us. And to know him is to know God who is revealed in him. And to know God is eternal life—the end for which the whole divine Manifestation comes forth from the bosom of the Infinite.

We have said that Jesus crowns and completes this manifestation. "What further, then?" you may ask. "If evolution has reached its highest, progress would seem to be at an end." No, not for the human race at large. God's way is to educate men through some higher man. The history of human progress is the history of the thought of a few individuals. We claim that the race of Israel is the High Priest of humanity. It is simply fact, not theory, that the consciousness of the Divine and of the spiritual relations of man, rose to its highest and broadest intuitions of truth in the Jewish mind. Other ancient races rose higher in art, in literature, in law, in science and philosophy; but in Jesus religion gave its clearest light to the world. The further the comparative study of religion is carried, the more will this be made to appear.

No sparkling planet, however brilliant its ray, will be mistaken for the central Sun. The religion of Jesus is for all mankind. He clearly indicated in his teachings what his own relation to other races was to be. He came to found a kingdom of God that should be universal. He *unlocalizes* its worship, and erects its temple and its altar wherever there is a heart to "worship in spirit and in truth." He irritates his countrymen with parables that intimate that they are no longer the special favorites of heaven. Once he tells them flatly that the kingdom of God should be taken from them and given to others, who would bring forth the fruits thereof. "Other sheep I have," says he to his own disciples, "which are not of this fold." And he finally gives them his commission to preach this kingdom in all the world, and to every creature. It was the kingdom of truth, the mastery in each soul gained by the good will over all the lower passions, right principle regnant over grasping greed, God in the heart enthroned over the man. It is to be as wide as the manifestation of the King. Wherever He can be seen He has the right to reign. And as God has consummated his self-revelation in Jesus, has made him "the brightness of His glory, and the express Image of His Person," by that fact Jesus is the *Crowned Head* of this kingdom of truth. He is lifted up to the view of all men in the Passion of Love, in the attraction of the cross, that he might draw all men unto himself. Blessed is the man who, feeling, yields to that divine attraction!

The New Birth.

JOHN iii; 3: Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.

"Born from above," you will see in the margin of your reference Bibles, which is the more accurate and the more suggestive rendering of the words of Jesus. As natural birth brings one into the world of the senses with organs for the perception of its objects, so a birth from above into the higher world of the spirit, must give him eye and ear and taste for the things of the spirit in order to the completeness of his being. This saying of Jesus to the timid Jewish ruler has ever possessed a peculiar attraction for the purer minds of the Christian world. Clouded often by a mystical and artificial interpretation, it makes itself felt even through the obscurity as a true light of heaven. Like the living fountain gushing from the hillside and fouled by the tread of some passing herd, it soon runs clear again, and men turn aside to slake their thirst from its pure waters. A perpetual sense of want, deep in the heart of our human nature, finds here its way to satisfaction.

It is only necessary to mention what has so often been explained, that the figure of the text was drawn from a well-known custom among the Jews of baptizing Gentile proselytes into the Jewish religion. This baptism had the

force of naturalization. It initiated the subject into the same privileges as if he had been born a Jew; and so he was counted as born again of the water of his baptism. Nicodemus, as a ruler of the Jews, ought to have understood that this baptism was but a symbol, and that the reality for which it stood was a heart of loyalty to the law of Jehovah. Without the true spirit of a Jewish citizen the symbol was but a mockery. So a man must be "born of water and of the spirit," says Jesus, before he can enter into the privileges of citizenship in the kingdom of God. He must get a heart of loyalty to this realm and rule of the Spirit.

It is hardly probable that the Teacher intended this figure, used by him so far as we know only on this single occasion, as the basis of a formal and fundamental doctrine of his Church, much less as an exaction that should be used, after the modern style, to concentrate the attention of penitents, in their initial efforts after amendment, upon some mysterious change to be divinely wrought within them, the perception of which should be hailed as God's smile of acceptance. Such a use only throws confusion over the way of repentance. It diverts the mind from the real duty to be done to the illusions that come of watching the flitting moods of feeling. If such had been the Savior's intention, it is strange that three out of four reporters of his sayings to us, make no mention of this doctrine. It virtually charges three of the Gospels with radical defect. And yet there can be no doubt that this

figure entered deeply into all the early Christian thought and teaching. Paul echoes it in such words as "The washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit," "Created anew in Christ Jesus," "Quickened in the spirit;" and John in his often reiterated, "Born of God," "Born, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." It expresses a great fact inherent and perpetual in human nature. Man must rise into the sense of his relation to God and the spirit world, or he cannot be a complete man. He is as dependent upon influences that come from that world for the full and rounded development of his moral being as his body is dependent in its growth upon the nourishment drawn from the material world. No other words can say this truth so strongly and so well as these—"Ye must be born from above." Our human need cannot afford to lay aside or forget this saying.

Do we ask, What makes this necessity? why this *Must*? The answer of some would be, Because sin hath depraved man's nature. We rather say, Because God hath made the need inherent in man's nature. The necessity is based in his very constitution. It pertains to man as man. He can never be a full-grown man without this new birth. The Adam would have needed to be born from above, if he had never eaten the apple. And why? Because he must rise out of the appetites and senses into the spiritual, or he can never become a true man. It is well enough for him to begin with eating; we must all

do that; but he must outgrow this putting of appetitive or material good above every higher interest and aim, or he remains less than a man. There is a spiritual life into which he must rise. Not to rise is to fall. This becomes apparent by simply tracing the growth of a human soul. We start with infancy. The babe comes into the world an animate bundle of uneasiness. It opens its eyes on this outward scene. Material things touch the senses and evoke their action. Appetite begins to crave as the heart beats, involuntarily. Hunger and pain raise the instinctive cry for relief—nature's prayer for food and help and parental providence. The bundle grows. It opens its eyes wider. The sense of color comes with the myriad tints that float in on beams of light. The vague feeling of beauty flits over the face in a smile. Sounds touch the ear and awaken another form of feeling. Explosions and discords send their fright into the look. Musical harmonies are seen playing over the features. The little auditor dances and crowds his applause, encoring every piece. But as yet there is no emotion higher than comes from the senses. Human forms are hardly distinguished from the marble bust in the niche on the wall. But ere long the mother's kiss meets a smile that means more than passive pleasure; it is a response to love. That is a great fact. The babe is born anew into filial love. The soul has risen out of the senses into a higher experience. Motherly tenderness has touched and quickened a new susceptibility of the being. How early we need not say; but the feeling

is new, better than any that went before—faint at first, like the dawn that breaks the darkness before the dawn, but full of promise. It may seem at the moment a very little matter, that faint, tremulous quiver of new-born love, vibrating over the chords of an infant's heart, and rippling out in smiles ; but who shall say it is not a great moment in the life of the child?—better than all beauty of colors, better than the keenest delight in musical harmonies, better than the best the senses can give ; a new faculty waked up, a new life within the soul begun. No doubt this will be slow in maturing and coming to its fullness of strength. The age of half lawless impulse succeeds. The babe grows into the rollicking child, that sees everything, wants everything, grasps at everything, putting no restraint upon itself, needing its law of restraint from an older will until it can learn self-restraint, filial love itself strangely mixed up with tops, marbles, kites and dolls. But what if that love had never waked? What if the very power had been left dormant? What would have been lost from the life? What would be lost out of the world and out of human experience here, if love to parents were never felt. Could we be complete? Ye must be born from above!

As maturity approaches, a more serious sense of relations to others falls on the soul. Vague yearnings prophesy new heart-births. Other regenerations are coming. Help comes from some "good Samaritan" in the hour of sorest need, and gratitude is born. No other

sentiment that moves the heart ever brings just the like experience. It is another new life. Two congenial spirits meet; heart answers to heart, and they become conscious of that new, good life within which we call friendship. There is even less of self in this than in the love of the child for the parent. In the sense of being more completely disinterested it is higher and purer. Two other souls exchange glances, and the affection is born which makes them one for life and one forever. God hath joined them together; let no man put them asunder. In this union Paradise is repeated in its morning purity and joy. So when the first-born is laid in the arms of the parent, it brings another regeneration. The heart is born again into a new kingdom of love. None but the parent, as every true parent knows, can see that kingdom and know its joy. What a new world of experiences is here entered! In this feeling we find the very crown of the natural affections. Parental love is the highest type of the love of the Father in heaven.

But is this growth of a soul yet complete? Are all the faculties waked? Is the man wholly alive? Is there not a higher kingdom of love and responsibility not yet entered? Man is a spirit as well as a being of intelligence and natural affections. Spirit is related to spirit as truly as body to body. If we are to say that man is immortal, that relation must extend to another life. All finite spirits are related to each other. If we are to say there is a God, an Infinite Spirit, all spirits are related to him.

And now pause a moment and think of the new world thus suggested. Is it conceivable that an Infinite Father in Heaven should pervade every spot on earth with his presence and warm every object with his love, yet the spirit of man be incapable of rising into a sense of the great fact? Is there a God, and yet must we live and feel and suffer and be in all things just as if there were no God? Are we indeed "his offspring," and must our hearts lie forever dead and cold under the smile of our Father? It cannot be! Reason, no less than the instinct of love, repels the chilling suggestion. It must be that we can *see God* in the spirit if our faith will consent to look for Him. It must be that we can raise our life into a living and growing sense of what he is. And what less can that vision be but the very life of our life? .

There are times when every heart craves this revelation. I believe it comes with more or less clearness to every earnest soul. To one earlier, to another later, but in every one that aspires to a better life there dawns the sense of a LIVING PRESENCE, greater, more solemn, more sweet, than the bodily eye ever sees. Nature hints this Presence in a thousand ways. Her bountiful growths satisfy our material wants. Her beauty kindles within us a pure joy. Her order speaks of an intelligent Mind and purpose. Her beneficent forces soothe our pains and heal our sicknesses. Think well, feel the deepest meaning of all these, and you will say there must be a Heart of goodness in them. And when we come into the light of

the Cross, the words, the life, the death of Jesus of Nazareth, the hint of nature rises into moral demonstration. The clearest Word of God's presence there speaks. The soul feels the reality. But whenever and by whatever means the revelation comes, its advent is the supreme hour of life. God discovers himself to the soul. Henceforth the best light that ever falls into this world lies in growing brightness on the pathway. When the teacher of the deaf and blind girl Laura Bridgman had succeeded with untiring effort and ingenuity in conveying to her imprisoned mind the thought of a Supreme Being, Creator of the universe and Father of all, the ecstasy into which it threw her, he says, was indescribable. She was held for some minutes in a sort of trance-vision. When she came to herself again and sought by her mute eloquence to express her emotions, her face glowed with what seemed more than mortal joy. A God, a Father, a Heart of love at the center of this vast cold universe! That was the supreme Fact. And this discovery, thus first opening itself to view, raised her life into a new world which has grown more bright and joyous as she has advanced in years. No wonder that the first opening of this Fact to any soul, in the shadows that rest so heavily on this mortal state, should seem to transfigure the universe. That light which was never on land or sea is in the soul. New faculties seem to wake. An encompassing Presence of Goodness and Power is felt. "Old things have passed away; behold, all things are become new!"

Now let us consider a moment where this view brings us. The "birth from above" which Jesus declares to be the essential condition of our seeing the kingdom of God, is no reconstruction of our natural constitution, as has often been imagined, no creation of new faculties within us, no arbitrary change wrought in us, against all known laws of the mind, by a force sent from heaven; it is in the line of the normal growth of the soul—the last great step towards its completion. It is the unsealing of the highest faculties of man. It is simply rising into the perception of our true relation to God and spiritual realities. That realm of the spiritual is real; it is all around us. We are part of it. This new birth is but opening the eyes of the spirit upon its own world. It should be no mystery that a man cannot enter that world and live in its relations until he gets a perception for its realities. Home is a meaningless word till one loves home. Friendship is but a sound on the tongue till one both has a friend and *is* a friend. No kingdom of love is entered but by love. What wonder, then, that a man cannot possess this highest birthright that crowns his humanity till the new birth opens his eyes.

The unnatural air of mystery which has been thrown around this theme is thus dissipated. This need is a great world-fact. It is as wide as humanity. It is a home fact for each of us. It is just as clear as the fact that we cannot be mathematicians, or see the kingdom of mathematics, if we will not study numbers, or that we

cannot be geologists if we give no attention to the facts of geology. It is simply saying that we cannot see a thing if we will not use the eye to see it.

Let us not imagine the truth loses its importance because it is thus cleared of its look of spiritual magic. It becomes us each to ask, Have we risen into any experience of this higher life? Are we born from above? Are we in the way to completeness of soul? We do not like to think of being dwarfs in body. But a dwarf body often carries a beautifully complete soul. Then the bodily misfortune is not very serious. But a dwarf-soul, a divine creature that stops short of complete growth—that is a sad spectacle! We are shocked to meet one of those abnormal beings that now and then appear on earth, like Pomeroy, the boy-murderer of Boston, who seem destitute of any power of moral perception. They are moral idiots. With all the keenness of intellect and desire seen in other human beings, they seem incapable of grasping the distinction between right and wrong, or feeling any of the obligations that bind others in their moral relations. No words can speak the repulsive monstrosity. May it not be that there are beings in a higher sphere that look upon that human soul that has never waked to the perception of God and divine things with feelings akin to those with which we look upon such an abnormal human creature? A soul dark toward God; blind to the things of prayer and sacred song, and all spiritual worship, that is to all these just as if there were no realities answering to them!

That surely we do not want to be. We have asked what would be lost from the life if filial love were never waked in the heart. We feel at once that no words could mourn that desolation enough. Would the loss be less if love to the Father in Heaven wakes not?

Let us be advised, also, to spend no time over the question how early this great change may take place in the child. Nurture children in the truth; tell them the story of the One who took little children in his arms and blessed them, and said "of such is the kingdom of heaven;" see that God's love shines on them through human love; then leave their hearts to wake as they will. Wake they will under this nurture, even as filial love wakes under the fostering of a mother's tenderness. Perhaps, as Bushnell suggests, children should never know when this new life begins. Perhaps if they were surrounded from the very dawn of their intelligence with the best influences of a Christian home they would "grow up Christians," and never think of a date for the great change.

Stay as little over the question where rests the point of our responsibility for this change. It is simply to use the powers that God has given to see and act. The presence of the Spirit is a fact. The pressure of the Spirit on conscience and heart is a fact. Every twinge of remorse, no matter how faint, every impulse and aspiration to leave the worse life and choose the better, is the contact of the spirit of God with the soul, moving it to the right way. Yield and act, and the new life is begun.

What is your responsibility for using the light of the Sun? It is to open your eyes, and then do the work you see to be done. The world of material things is real, is permanent. God has given the light and given you eyes to see them. The world of spiritual things is more real, more permanent. God is the ever present light, and has given you eyes to see these too. Your part is to open your eyes and act on what you see. Let in the light; and let the light meet an obedient will; and the heart is at home with God.

Furthermore, let it never be forgotten that the new birth is not a matured life. It is a new life quickened but not grown. It is but the starting germ. If not fostered it will die. If kept alive it will be according to the culture it receives. Neglected, overshadowed by the rank growths of worldliness, it will be dwarfed and sickly; cherished with daily prayer and Christlike works it will rise into a strong tree of life, "yielding its fruits every month." No mistake is more disastrous than the idea that the spiritual life once begun will take care of itself. Religion is an education as well as an inspiration. The result will be as the conditions and culture given. The filial love that turns away satisfied with a few glimpses of the Father's face will die in its infancy. It lives only in the Father's presence and in finding its delight there day by day. In no other way can it live and grow.

When this vision of God is not unsealed till the years of maturity, the occasion on which the change comes are

infinitely varied. It may be some moment of high thought or clear insight, when the eye suddenly pierces the crust of material things and rests directly upon the Reality, of which they are but the shadow. It may be in the solemn twilight, when out of the gathering mystery of darkness, steals into the hushed soul a sense of HIM who gave the sunset its glory and night its palpitating sheen of stars. It may be under the depression of some great sorrow, when the spirit lies crushed, and panting for a love that cannot betray, a friend that will not forsake, a comforter who will not deceive, a refuge that cannot fail, and suddenly it feels itself in the supporting arms of an Infinite Goodness. It may be, especially to one who has sinned grievously, in the terrible smiting of conscience, when fear and shame and conscious unworthiness are just falling into despair; but lo, a change comes as the eye turns heavenward; a strange, unlooked for peace gives assurance that the great Father hath not cast off his unworthy child. Let no one await occasion. The sense of spiritual want, weakness, imperfection, the cry of the soul for help to live a better life and be a better soul, is the occasion. The renewing Spirit is never absent. The Helper is ever ready. Turn the thoughts to Him, and even before the lips can utter the heart's call the infinite Life and Love answer.

It only needs to be added that we have in this doctrine of the "birth from above," which has so generally been clouded with mystery and transcendental sentiment, another example of the perfect simplicity, reasonableness, and accord with nature that run through all the teachings of our Savior

The Atonement.

JOHN iii: 16, 17, 18: For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God.

If you had a bad, reckless boy who had trampled on your commands and spurned your kindness, and run away from home, and continued to outrage all your known wishes in such behavior that his own self-accusing conscience made him afraid to return, the feeling of ill-desert in him picturing your anger as burning to get hold of him and take vengeance on his evil conduct, that feeling, you readily see, so long as it is unassured, must bar all reconciliation. Fear dare not return; and fear is next of kin to hate. But that feeling is partly an error. Its sense of guilt and shame is just; it ought to be felt; but its picture of your wrath burning for vengeance is the fiction of a guilty conscience. Your heart towards your erring boy longs for his repentance and return home. Now if you would effect a reconciliation and bring him back to you, what must you do? You must correct this false impression; you must let him know how you really feel towards him; you must in some way manifest your love to him. And nothing will tell your whole heart to

him, and make him feel how he has misjudged and wronged you, as when he sees you suffering for his sake. Words are cheap; it is easy to pretend love; but when he sees you on the rack of agony for his disgrace; when you go after him in long, painful journeyings, and down into the disgusting haunts of his degradation that you may speak kindly to him and invite him home, he knows how you feel. Affection will do this; but affectation never makes its displays at such expense. You effect a twofold result—you dissipate the false idea of his guilty fear; and better, you make him feel, if all sense of manhood is not gone, his own baseness in so outraging your love. No wrath waits at home, rod in hand, to smite him; the way is open; the welcome is assured; the mightiest of all attractions, love, draws him home; and no other power could do so much to make him fit to come, and want to come.

Here, if I have rightly apprehended it, you have the Gospel. This little picture of a possible and sometimes actual human experience will give you a true idea of the divine atonement for man's sin, what it is, how it acts, and the results it effects. God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Sin on the part of man, manifold disobediences and wickednesses, the unrest, sometimes the sharp remorse, of a guilty conscience for these—which we ought to feel—the fear born naturally of this sense of guilt, which paints God as a

grim Wrath, though His name is Love; a mistake; but one that must shut the gate of repentance and reconciliation with God until it is corrected—to man in this condition God sends forth his Son, the manifestation of his love, to correct the mistake of his fear, melt his enmity to repentance and call him home. Remember now that the highest manifestation of God to man is in and through man, remember that in Jesus we “see the Father,” the clearest Word that speaks the heart of God to man, then the expression of God’s love in Christ to you and me is just as direct, just as personal, as if we had been the sole object of his coming. If we are sinners, if we are in the need that sin creates, here is God’s appeal of love to our hearts. He asks our reconciliation to himself. We know in Christ that the way is open and welcome awaits us.

I. Let us seek an answer to the inquiry, What is the atonement? Cleared of all artificial notions, interpreted, as it must be if we would ever understand it, by human experience, we shall learn that it has been no mistake to count the sacrifice in the life and death of Jesus the divinest fact that has fallen into the life of our sin-disordered world. We shall discover it to be the very heart of power to save the lost, to lift up the fallen, to give the despairing hope. We shall find it to be a fact that multiplies itself in every noble life and runs through all holy endeavor to make the world better, as the very spring and life that impels the beneficent activities.

Bear in mind the simple illustration with which we

started, and you will see that objectively considered, *the Atonement is the expression of love to the unworthy by self-sacrifice*. It is the costly manifestation of love. It is the heart speaking by its own pain. In this is its power to reconcile or atone. Set aside at once the idea that Christ's atonement is an enduring of the penalty of transgression in the place of the sinner, pays his debt, satisfies justice, placates God, appeases His wrath, soothes His vengeance, moves His heart to mercy, or does anything, *aside from the effect wrought in the sinner*, to make it possible for God to forgive. It does not change God's feeling; it simply declares what his feeling is. It does not *make* the fact or possibility that God can forgive the penitent; it *declares* that fact. It tells us what has been a fact from eternity in the bosom of God, and would have remained a fact if no outward atonement or expression of it had been made. Just as Paul teaches the Romans: "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus,"—not to make Him righteous in forgiving, but to let the world know that He is righteous. God's declaration of love to the world in Jesus opens to view his heart as eternal forgiveness to the repenting. It tells us the sinner is forgiven the moment he

repents. Heart-felt repentance is the only condition. God's love is forgiveness, and takes effect the instant the sinner repents, as the sun begins to warm the instant one comes out of a dungeon into his light. The sun does not change; the darkened soul is the one that changes.

It was once the style to represent God as a hot sky, shimmering with wrath over the sinner, and closing pitilessly down upon him; and the atonement was to cool His burning vengeance, and hold back its fires. This fell in with the mistake of guilty fear, confirmed instead of correcting it. It virtually said to the sinner, God does feel toward you just as your terrified conscience imagines. The Father is irreconcilably mad with his child. His wrath "burns as an oven" to consume you. Your repentance, be it never so deep and thorough, cannot appease him. It is not enough. His outraged law, his angry justice, demands satisfaction. Somebody must suffer to soothe this wrath. It must have a victim. And so the Atonement of Christ was not primarily to declare or manifest the love of God, but to satisfy the law for the sin of man. It was to work a change in God rather than in the sinner. It was to content justice with the sight of the suffered penalty of the law, or what was equivalent to the penalty; although in what way justice could find any satisfaction in the suffering of the innocent for the guilty, or accept it, or any substituted pain, as an equivalent to the penalty, no principle upon which we are accustomed to estimate and apply that quality makes apparent.

That love suffers for the unworthy, we know; it is a fact as wide as human goodness. That it finds a peculiar satisfaction in expressing itself by pain or sacrifice, if occasion demands, we know; every mother's heart that wears out her body to save her sinning child, every effort that goes forth in toil and reproach to rescue the tempted, to raise the fallen, to wash the uncleanness of vice from human souls, is a demonstration. That God's love should find a way of expressing itself to men through suffering in the divinest of men, we can understand; but that He should feel any satisfaction in the sight of a guiltless one suffering for the claim of a law that the sufferer has never broken, or that He should refuse to forgive the penitent until he sees some innocent one suffer the pain due their sins, or suffer at all on their account, seems but the confusion of all justice, nay, but for the blindness of the mistake, the awfulest of blasphemies. Do you say that the sense of justice in Him must demand something more than repentance before it forgives? Think a little. Would your sense of justice as a parent stop your straying child on the threshold, returning to you thoroughly humbled, penitent, contrite, and insist that he should suffer more, or somebody must suffer for him, before you will forgive? Is there anything in your heart that clamors to see somebody pained for his disobediences before you will consent to be reconciled? If there is, so much the worse for your heart. Or if you say it is necessary to make an example of the disobedient, or inflict suffering on

some one to make an equivalent impression, is there anything in you that would take the least satisfaction in seeing an innocent person pained for the child of your neighbor, returning in penitence to his home, before the father should accord forgiveness? If there is, so much the worse for yourself. A right temper could need no such spectacle to confirm its fidelity. God's government does not stand upon any such subterfuges. God's authority needs no such devices to keep it in respect. God's love finds no bar in the way of its mercy but the hard impenitence of the heart. When that yields to the manifestation of his love, the atonement goes into effect in the soul. God and the sinner are *at-one*.

We conclude, therefore, that the sacrifice of Jesus is not to move God's feelings toward the sinner, but to *declare* what His feelings are; not an expiation of man's sin, but a manifestation of God's love; not to satisfy justice, but to satisfy love in the effort to win back the hearts of God's alienated children.

II. We turn to inquire how we may enter into the realization of this great fact? It took place more than eighteen hundred years ago. It was in an obscure corner of the world. It was the life and death of a plain peasant, who was crucified on a charge of sedition, in company with two criminals. What was there in this man to touch all our lives more closely and deeply than any other, yea, than all other facts in human history? No startling stroke of genius, no vast achievement, noth-

ing that made the world stand amazed, or even sent any report of itself beyond the boundaries of the little state in which it occurred till some years later. How could there be anything in an event of such small notice to make a revolted world of men change front in their attitude towards God, lay down arms, and sue for him to resume his sovereignty over them? It does not look possible. No, not to our coarse way of estimating events by the loudness of their report, or the amount and flashing brilliance of their display. None of the deeper meanings of life ever come to this mood. It requires a certain faith that looks through the show of things to their substance to interpret the sacrifice in the life and death of Jesus. Faith only can catch the significance of any really great event. The grandest meanings always hide under an unimpressive exterior. Look at our Declaration of Independence. It made us a nation. What was there in the surroundings amid which it arose to notify men of the power it held? A few plain men deliberating together in a dingy hall, in behalf of two or three millions of poor people, scattered along the coast of a wild continent of savages. Here was no look of power. The grand courts of Europe, and the captains that could count their soldiers by hundreds of thousands, might well have smiled at that little band. But the throb of liberty was in their hearts; the flame of liberty was on their lips; the nerve of freemen guided their pen; and so the little act they sent forth to the world, alive in every sentence with the

spirit of the hearts from which it sprung, has been the inspiration to manlier thoughts and grander deeds of growing millions of freemen through more than a century, and gathers, rather than loses, power of inspiration for the millions of other centuries to come. The world is changing front in its government of men at the sound of that still, small voice. It was only faith in truth, justice, liberty, man, God, that could have seen the meaning there was in that little event. It is only faith in these that can catch any of the grander significances of life. If we have not that faith, God pity us; for it is certain that without it we must remain blind to all that is best worth seeing. And when you turn the eye of a faith that can see on the Sufferer of Calvary, mark the spirit in which he lived take in the scope of the words he spoke, and see how he dies, you will not want any grandeurs of outward display to reveal the Divinity there expressed. You will be glad that these are away. They would but annoy and divert your mind. You *feel* there the mightiest power that has dropped into human history. We know that more of God is expressed in man than in any or all other of His works. Most of God is expressed in the highest man. And faith will make no doubt, while it gazes there, that it is indeed looking upon the highest and completest manifestation of the thought and heart of God toward men that has ever been given to our earth. "He that believeth in him is not condemned."

III. The fruits of experience and life that must spring

from this sacrifice, so apprehended by faith, are now easily anticipated. God's love manifest; man's heart touched by its power; the guilt-stricken, alienated child reconciled to his Father—this but tamely expresses the changed conditions under which the life goes forward that has accepted the atonement. It will be a new life. It will drink from the living fountains of divine Goodness. It will walk in the light of God.

I have presented Christ as manifesting the love of God to our race in an entirely natural way. If there is a God, will any one doubt that he loves us as we learn in Christ? I have presented him as seeking to move us to repentance and better living by a means that is entirely intelligible and reasonable, a power that the universal human heart confesses to be the mightiest to soften enmity and effect reconciliation. I have presented him as living and suffering to meet the need of our actual condition, a broken harmony with God, alienation from Him. Is this real? Was the work of Jesus more than a fiction? Is the state of things in man's relation to God what he assumed? Then the charge against us is serious. It touches us individually. It says if the love of God does not move us to repentance, we remain alienated from Him. It is to make us feel our sin, our individual responsibility and need, as well as God's love. Till that sense of sin is felt there is no atonement. We shall do well to understand our condition. It looks like a verge of bankruptcy that admits of no trifling in the case. If it be a fact that we

are not in relations of perfect harmony with God, if we have crossed the divine justice, or stained the divine purity, or wronged the infinite Goodness, in thought, or word, or act, then the eternal nature of things, the immutable laws of our own being make it certain that we can never come back into that lost harmony and be at one with God, save through repentance and faith. Once in sin, the way back into purity is forever closed unless repentance, deep and hearty, opens the gate. The certainty is as sure as that God will not change, or that we will remain responsible beings. Here is no fictitious hell; we are dealing with ourselves, with facts as they are, with inflexible verities. There is no sharp device of infinite craft, with amiable wishes to help us, that can let us go free. No substitute, though his pain for us were infinite, can stand for that repentance. The necessity will not lapse with time, will not wear away, will not be lost in the variety of changing experiences, will not grow lighter by the smallest atom, will not be forgotten by the laws of the soul, even should it drop wholly out of our memory. The party that is in the wrong must yield; and God is not that party. The repentance must be just as deep and humbling as the error demands, or the life inevitably goes on under whatever curse is implied in being out of harmony with God. We know the terms under which we live, if we but think. I want to be no terrorist; but I want to see things as they are. I cannot speak otherwise than as I see. And no rose-water Gospel here will meet

the case. I have come to feel entirely sure that if Christianity be not at heart radically false, if there is any truth in its central aim, its proclaimed mission to the world, any need of its work, the world of our time has fallen into a way of passing by its warnings with a cheerful levity that bodes no good. We groan, it is true, over the corruptions of the times; we exclaim over human depravity in the mass; we fling about us unsparing charges of the baseness practiced in high places and low; but if one grows really serious and attempts to individualize and fix the sin to its point of responsibility, we turn red in the face and pronounce it an impertinence. Humanity is sick, and is putting little check on indulgences that inflame its disease; but we expect it to get well. We seem to think that the average individual can be rising while the nation or community whose common life he represents is sinking. We feel quite easy about ourselves if we are not worse than the average. We take little concern to ourselves about a cure for our moral ailments. Sometimes we boast of our expanding knowledge, and look to that as the panacea of all evils. We seem to think there is some magic in the acquaintance with a few more facts of science, or broader ideas of human life, to stay the eager passions of men and bring us moral health. But the wounds of sin do not heal under this salve; their corruptions continue to flow. Oh, how much men need the sense of sin that the atonement strives to awake! It must go before amendment. It is the indispensable pre-

requisite. We cannot grow better till it comes. Individual sin, need, imperfection—ours, yours, mine—this must be felt before there can be improvement in us. The nation, the race, can improve only as this individual conscience is quickened, and its sense of responsibility raised.

But when this comes a new world begins. The atonement sets the heaven of God's love open, wide open. The Father will welcome the penitent, and pour his helping grace into the soul to conquer sin. Life will get a new meaning. The very evils in the world will give it a new zest, by giving it an aim and a work. The originality of a little moral earnestness will relieve the aching emptiness of its routine, and lift the intolerable weariness of its efforts to be amused. We shall wonder that life hid such glorious meanings for us close along our path, and we failed to discover them. The new creation rising within us and around us will be hailed with a deeper and steadier exultation than ever greeted the old; a loftier anthem will be in the soul than when the morning Stars sang together and all the Sons of God shouted for joy!

Repentance and Forgiveness.

Luke xv: 17, 18, 19: And when he came to himself he said, * * I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

1 John i: 9: If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

These Scriptures, taken together, bring under one view repentance and forgiveness, the act of turning from sin, and the fruit of that act ever received in the inward cleansing from unrighteousness. These are vital truths in the teachings of Christ. They mark the starting-point of the Christian life, and, I think, will be found the quickening impulse in every incipient effort for moral improvement.

I have incidentally touched upon repentance and forgiveness in treating of the Atonement; but the importance of the subject demands a more extended discussion.

It were well, doubtless, if we needed no repentance—if we could scan every step of our past and challenge heaven's scrutiny and claim God's approval. But no mortal is capable of that degree of self-conceit. We have sinned; we are imperfect. That is the universal consciousness, more or less clear. Being what we are, no act is more noble in us than repentance. It is the re-assertion of the soul's supremacy over the lower nature. It is proof

that the moral vitality in it is stronger than the depravity of its disease. It is spiritual convalescence, the promise that the soul, however weak, will again be well.

Repentance is the declaration of war against one's own sins and conscious imperfections. It is no passive sorrow or languid regret for what has been done, and feeble wish that we had not done it; it is a confession to our own heart, and if the case demands, to the injured also, that we have done wrong, a sense of the moral weakness in us that led to the wrong; and then an active, vigorous taking sides practically against our own wrong and for the right. *Purpose* is the decisive element in repentance. Feeling must go before the purpose, no doubt, the sense of sin which says, with Paul, "The law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good, the evil is in me." This recognizes the need of action. Then the energetic *Will* to stop the sin and conquer the weakness that gave it room, and to abide henceforth in the law from which it departed—this only can consummate the change which can properly be called repentance. "War to the death and no quarter," is the motto of the sincere penitent, as he enlists for this struggle with evil in himself. The crisis of the Prodigal's repentance was the purpose, "I will arise and go unto my father." Not the degree of feeling, but the vigor of this resolution was what determined the result. *Action* was what carried him home and restored him to a place in his father's house. The resolute "I will" was the pivot on which he turned homeward.

Now observe: The Divine forgiveness is never to be thought of as separated from repentance. It is ever as early and as full as the repentance; never an instant later or less complete. How can we know this? No voice from the throne of the Supreme falls on the ear, saying, "Thou art forgiven." No parchment of pardon is sent forth attested by the sign and seal of sovereign Authority, commanding, "Let this soul go free." How can we fathom the infinite Mind and find assurance that the word has passed therein, "I forgive?" The answer is by an infallible witness within—the consciousness of restored harmony with the broken law of the Father, and so with the Father from whom the breach alienated us. Forgiveness responds to repentance, and love responds to forgiveness—the witness of the Spirit in our spirits that we are the children of God. We need no other parchment of pardon. It is the nature of love to forgive as it is the nature of the sun to shine; and "God is Love." The condition of repentance being present, it is as impossible for the fact of forgiveness to be absent as it is that the sun's rays, where every obstructing object is removed, should not make it light. The shadow departs with the dark body that casts it; the divine condemnation goes with the sin which repentance puts away. "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The voice of God within assures our forgiveness. As repentance is taking sides with the violated law against ourselves and against

the violating evil in our own hearts, so forgiveness appears in a rising delight in the law that condemns our sin and ourselves. It is conscious victory in the warfare with evil. It is a manly sense of having come out of the wrong and of being heartily in the right. It is the peace and joy of conscious harmony with God welling up from the fellowship of love. It is the incipient realization of that health of soul of which repentance is the promise.

Guard against a half idea of these words which has done infinite mischief. Ask many a Christian what repentance is, and the answer would be, "Sorrow for sin." Ask, what is forgiveness? And the reply is, "Taking away penalty." Both answers mislead. Sorrow there is in repentance, no doubt; one who can look upon a wrong he has done, or a wrong in himself, and feel coldly indifferent, is not in the way to repent; he must feel or he will not act. And *action*, energetic purpose moving into execution, rather than feeling, is, as we have seen, the central force of repentance. It is turning from the wrong to the right. It is forsaking sin by righteousness, and iniquity by turning unto the Lord. But sorrow alone is not repentance. The child under the raised rod is sorry he has disobeyed; the thief in the hands of the policeman is sorry for his theft; the murderer marched into court to receive sentence is sorry for his crime. All have sorrow or feeling enough. But not one of them may be truly repentant. It is sorrow that they are caught, not that they have broken the law. It is regret that they must be

punished, not remorse that they have sinned. There is no condemnation of their own act; no taking sides against themselves with the law; no resolute inward turning from the sin to the right. Pardon them and they will be plotting to repeat the crime before they are fairly out of the hands of the sheriff. No such repentance can find forgiveness, because there is no real change of heart toward the law; no assent to it as good; no harmony with its justice; no joy in its Giver. The law that punishes is a dread and a hate; the Lawgiver a terror or a tyrant.

And let us beware how we delude ourselves with the idea that forgiveness is a taking away of penalty. The soul whom God forgives has to bear the direct penalty of its sin. The penitent drunkard bears the shattered constitution of his bad habits; and forgiveness may not save him from premature death. The bad temper carries its jarred and morbid nerves long after others have forgiven and forgotten the wounds of its thrusts. The dishonest trader who has been for many years in bad standing, struggles under debility of conscience long after old scores are cleared and every victim has reached out to his penitent endeavors the right hand of fellowship. The sore remains after the irritant has been removed. The scar stays after the sore heals. It is a strong delusion which imagines that the penalty of sin goes when forgiveness comes. But this forgiveness does—which is better than mere removal of penalty—being the consciousness of restored harmony with law, it ceases to break the law. It

stops incurring new penalties. Its delight in the law and its love of the Lawgiver inspires brave endurance and good cheer in bearing those already incurred till they shall have run their course. And that is the appeal with which nature, the voice of God speaking in our own experience, urges to early repentance. The earlier the easier.

We must not confound God's forgiveness with the pardon of the human executive. Human law has an arbitrary penalty. The legislator says what it will be for the given crime. The chief magistrate may say it shall not be inflicted. That takes it away. The prison is not connected by an immutable chain of cause and effect with theft, nor the gallows with murder. Petition the Governor for pardon, and if he says, "Let the prisoner go free," the culprit escapes the penalty that man has affixed to his crime. But in God's administration the law is self-executing. The sinner is his own executioner. It is as if the prison walls began to close round the thief the moment he commits the theft, or the murderer felt the black cap drawing over his eyes, and the fatal drop under his feet, and the noose tightening around his neck in the very act of smiting his victim. The very flow of the forces in our constitution brings God's penalty for sin—the hard heart, the blunted moral sensibilities, the momentum in evil that rushes on with ever increasing impulse to repeat the sin. If we have gained the right view of God as being *in nature*, those forces are the action of God himself, the Omnipresent in whom "we live and move and have our

being." God can no more arrest them than he can deny himself. We can cease hurling ourselves against them; we can stop crossing the track of their flow; we can, by repentance, come into harmony with them. Then the wounds we have got by throwing ourselves across their current will ere long heal, and we shall move peacefully with them on toward the home of the soul. But God would reverse the whole system of his moral government if he should take away the penalty of these immutable forces as the chief magistrate takes away the penalty of human law.

Let me counsel you, again, to banish carefully the habit of thought, fixed by ages of artificial religious teaching, which looks for some external infliction of penalty at the hand of God in the world to come. The old Greeks and Romans had their Underworld of gloomy shades, with various devices of torture; the Jews, their Sheol and Gehenna, "where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched;" and the Christian Church has ever had its lake of fire to frighten the evil-doer. These gross images have been literalized in the common mind to make up their ideas of the future state. They have constituted the capital of religious sensationalists to alarm the ignorant and unthinking. And even where these images are refined into something less gross, the inveterate habit of ages still lingers that thinks of God as coming forth from the order of his moral rule to inflict some form of pain, some lash on the nerves of the sinner. There is an unde-

finest dread of this in millions who would now laugh at the lake of fire. I will not say that this is never a useful restraint on men. It may be that gross natures can be reached only by gross ideas of penalty, that the soul of some can be touched only through the sense; but I love to think better of the general intelligence. Sure I am that if we are ever to have a religion that the human mind will not outgrow and reject as in great part a superstition fit only for children and savages (and not fit for them), we must lay aside these fictions of terror, and direct the minds of men to the real penalty of sin in the soul of the sinner, the spiritual death there that comes with the sin as fever and pain and diseased condition come with the poison taken. I do not believe it necessary or useful to terrify the people at large with absurdities which, if real, would make God a demon and the universe a horror to every being of holy sympathies within its limits. I believe they can be made to feel the restraint of that self-executing law, written in every fiber and nerve of their bodies, and read, if they will, in every motion of their minds and hearts, whose penalty, when broken, is as certain as that the pulse of moral life shall throb on in the soul. Continue to appeal to animal fear and you will have Christians whose religion is an animal fear, marked by the mercurial fickleness and unsteadiness of that feeling. Speak to the moral sense, and the powers you address will awake.

Let us say, then, that the dread of an outward infliction

of suffering at the hand of God is an illusion. You have no need to ask the forgiveness which removes such a penalty; there is no such penalty to be removed. God has no intention to so punish; never had; never will have. It is a mere phantom of the guilty brain. The guilt-stricken soul is doomed, indeed, by its very condition, deranged by its own evil act, to forebode the wrath of some angry Nemesis, the vague fear says not what. It is the voice of nature kindly warning it to stop, turn back, and not work remediless ruin in itself. But God is not its enemy. His hand will not hurl the ruin. No! the worst that the soul has to fear from the "Father Almighty" is the word, "Let him alone! he has chosen his way and his portion; he refuses any part in me; he is joined to his idols; let him alone!" And this word is never spoken save through the laws of the soul's own activities.

Equally delusive is the idea that God will go outside of established law, or set aside his moral order, to repair the moral mischiefs we may do ourselves. Wherever Christianity has been represented as a scheme for this purpose, sooner or later a lower tone of conscience, a relaxed sense of the obligation of law and of the absolute necessity of obedience, has followed. Men have been ready enough to infer that a Sovereign who was so ingenious in circumventing the demands of his own laws, would certainly find some way to repair any ruin they could cause. The law loses its hold. It becomes but a thread of tow in the flame of human passion and desire. The

feeling takes possession of the mind that God is not in earnest with us. The state of mind it induces was well illustrated by the words of a lecturer heard by many of us a few evenings since, in this place. Said he "When my little girl, playing around the house, breaks anything, she says at once, 'Never mind ! Papa will fix it !' She knows there is a strong love at hand that can and will set things right. So we are children at play in this world which God has given us for a home. However badly wrong affairs may go, we may comfort ourselves with the assurance that the great Father will mend all. No need of despondency and despair." Well, to the spirit of obedience this is a safe and beautiful trust; to the careless and self-indulgent, it is not only false in fact, but it is sure to be taken as a license to riot. It is not a truth for any who are not already under the law of love. It is a corrupting delusion, cruel as the grave, to all others. Our Father in heaven will set all things right; he will mend what can be mended in the order of his immutable working; but we do well to remember that we may break what he will not mend. Wound the young tree slightly and God will mend it. The law of vegetable life, working steadily on year after year, at last grows over the wound, and hides, though not wholly restores, the weak place in the wood. Gash your own body, so that you touch no vital part, nor raise a fatal fever in the blood, and God will mend the blow. The vital force, busy with friendly ministries to repair the violence you have done

your own flesh, will heal the wound, though it leaves a scar. Law is merciful. But break an egg and God will not mend the violence. You have put it beyond the repairing force of law. God will stand by his fixed order. Send a bullet through a vital part of the brain, or strike a dagger through the heart, and God will not mend the harm. You have gone beyond the limits of mercy under law. There is no healing agency to reach the case. And so all nature and all life teem with proofs that God loves to repair our breaks and heal what can be healed, but are equally strown with demonstrations that we must not take his goodness in mending our mischiefs as the annulling of law, or in the smallest degree slackening the tension of its obligation. We may mar so that he will not mend. We know what to expect.

We have seen the necessity of repentance in order to forgiveness. Sin once done remains an eternal fact; there is no recall. The alienation from infinite Truth and Goodness it ever carries with it remains, unless the sinner takes sides against his sin. The law changes not; conscience changes not; God changes not. The only possible return to harmony, therefore, among these immutable factors, is that change in the heart of the sinner which expels the element of discord. Alienation ceases when sincere confession begins. The contrite heart God will not despise.

But let us turn from the necessity to a few concluding words on the privilege of repentance. To an imperfect being this is heaven's best gift, for it opens the way for

all other good. It is for the prodigal the privilege of return to his father's house. It is for the hungry the privilege to be fed. It is for the naked the privilege to be clothed. It is for the sick the privilege to be well again. It is for the dying the privilege of return to life and the full joys of life. It is for the imperfect, conscious of their defects, the open way of return to perfection.

We may better appreciate the privilege by a view of its contrast. The deepest touch in Milton's picture of the misery of a lost spirit is the dark impossibility of repentance. The Arch Fiend pauses in his flight to earth for the seduction and ruin of man:

"Horror and doubt distract
His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir
The Hell within him; for within him Hell
He brings, and round about him; nor from Hell
One step, no more than from himself, can fly
By change of place; now Conscience wakes Despair
That slumbered, wakes the bitter memory
Of what he was, what is, and what must be
Worse: of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.

* * * * *

Me miserable ! which way shall I fly,
Infinite wrath and infinite despair?
Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell,
And in the lowest deep a lower deep,
Still threatening to devour me, opens wide,
To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heav'n."

A soul broken away from God's harmony, at conscious discord with itself, and by all the action of its own powers throwing that discord into more dreadful and hopeless confusion. From the incipient steps towards this condition repentance is the privilege of return. It touches

with the foot a firm rock which stays the soul sinking into the mire by the helpless weight with which it has loaded itself. It is a firm support which the sinner may grasp and feel himself drawn upward by a power, mighty to save, back to light and life. Recovered harmony with himself, the father's house, the feast of joy, the bosom of God—all this for consenting, not to anything degrading to himself, but to see his own imperfections, and ask God's help to put them away.

The Holy Spirit.

John xiv: 16, 17: That He may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of truth.

The complete man is a three-fold being. He lives in three worlds here on earth. He has powers to discern the objects of each. His senses reveal material things; his intellect opens to him a world of science, truths, principles, causes and laws; his conscience and moral affections bear him into a world of spiritual relations and activities, a life of duty, sympathy, aspiration and love. None of us doubt the reality of the material world, the solid earth under our feet, with its soil and rock, its colors, shapes, sounds, odors and tastes. The open senses never leave one moment without proof of the reality of these, or of our relation to them. The intellect also is out very early on its scientific explorations, gathers and classifies facts, thinks, reasons, comes to conclusions, makes many mistakes, revises, corrects, and goes on to enlarge its stores of knowledge. This costs effort. The price of large learning is large toil. It is not so easy to see clearly in the world of science as it is in the world of sense. It is harder for the mind to think than for the senses to feel. The more valuable the objects discovered, the more pains required to find them. No wonder, then, that clear and full spiritual discernment comes slowest and latest, only

with the greatest care. "The natural first, afterward that which is spiritual," says Paul. This higher world must be conquered; we are not born to its throne. We begin in the natural; advance carries us into the spiritual. And as it costs the best training and highest effort of the powers of intellect to attain the broadest and clearest understanding of the natural, the knowledge of science and practical affairs, so the right view of the spiritual can never be ours without due discipline and endeavor. Let this fact conciliate us towards the demands which this subject makes upon our close attention.

There is a peculiarity in the teachings of Jesus in respect to our spiritual relations which it is of the utmost importance that we should understand. It is the heart of his religion. He contemplates man as now living in close and influential relations with the spirit world. He is not getting ready to live in it, but lives in it. The powers of that world live in him. Influences from thence color his thoughts and feelings, suggest aims of life, bias his plans and purposes, and impel his activities. He is a denizen of the unseen world now. He lives and moves and has his being in its vital relations. And this is no life in the air. Faith is the power that discerns its realities. It "is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It is the soul's eye for the spiritual world. God, the ever-present Spirit, is the great fact of that world. Faith sees Him, feels Him, knows Him as the indwelling Spirit, and so makes the out-goings of the soul's life, in

its varied manifestations to men, bear in them qualities that can emanate only from a Divine source. But to do this it must be *faith*; not mere cold belief, but real spiritual sight, the deepest, most living sense of actual relations in the heart. Mark the difference. Great spiritual blindness and corruption have come of confounding the two. Belief is of the intellect; faith is of the heart and conscience. Belief looks at facts; faith lays hold of spiritual powers. Belief assents; faith affirms. Belief searches for truth; faith finds the truth. Belief is passive; faith throbs with vital energy. Belief is morally indifferent; faith is alive with keen moral interest. Belief admits the spiritual fact and turns away careless of its claim; faith feels its obligation and lives on its motive. To belief God is a tradition; to faith a living Presence. To belief He is a cold, distant fact somewhere behind the sky; to faith He is a warm Love, an active Goodness, at the center of soul's life. Ye believe in God, says Jesus, believe also in me. That is, make your belief a faith; bring that Most High God, Omnipotent Creator and Ruler of the world, in whom your traditions teach you to believe, near to you as a Father, within you as a Holy Spirit, to guide you into all truth and abide in you forever as the Comforter. Then you will see and, seeing, have peace.

This is the central truth of Christ's teachings. What the sun is to the solar system is this doctrine of the indwelling, guiding, life-giving Spirit to the words of Christ on man's duty and destiny. They revolve in its light,

and hold their orbits and harmony under its power. In the outset of his public life he had proclaimed the truths of the Sermon on the Mount, the by-laws, so to speak, or practical code of the kingdom of God which he was founding among men, regulating man's duties to his fellow men; a pure morality, having much in common with other religions, but carrying its law inward to the secret thoughts and motives, and exalting the whole even then by giving the Father in Heaven as the model and law for the spirit and conduct of man; but here, standing in the shadow of his own cross, giving his dying counsels to his friends, he opens their relation to God and the eternal world in this promise of the Holy Spirit. He dwells upon this truth with fond repetition. He varies its form in a score of different presentations. He insists that they will find more of comfort and light in it than in his presence, making it even better for them that he should go away. He crowns his instructions with this one word of life and power, giving force and effect to the whole; for well he knew that it was only in the living sense of this immediate relation to God that human conscience would get and maintain its proper tone, or human senses rise out of their lusts, or the human heart out of its selfishness. The law of human duty must draw its vitality from this truth. The Sermon on the Mount would become a dead letter without this sense of a present God.

This Word of the Spirit raises the faith of Christ out of a dry code of duty and makes it a religion. Along

with the commandment it sends the impulse and the power to obey. Under it the law of duty is not a whip but a lamp. The feet love the path it lights. Eagerness to obey outruns all naked rules of action. The child glories in pleasing the Father under whose eye he acts. The motives that Jesus gives to faith are the strongest and the steadiest the heart ever feels.

It is no less a Word of reason than of faith. Grant that there is a God and you have affirmed Christ's promise of the Holy Spirit in its fulness. Is the Infinite One a reality; and can He be absent? Can He be indifferent? Can He withhold his aid, in such measure as is possible for us to receive, from our good endeavors? The thought would undeify Him. To doubt the promise is to stand balancing between Christ and atheism. So certainly is Christ's doctrine of the Spirit a truth based in the constitution of man, that it was an inference of reason before it was a revelation from his lips. The higher spirits of the heathen world caught its light. Socrates regarded himself as ever moving under the guidance of a good Spirit. The biographer of Epictetus says that the sense of the Divine Presence was ever so vivid in him that it made his whole life a hymn of praise to God. And Seneca affirms in language almost identical with that of Jesus, that "the Spirit of God is ever with us, yea, dwells *within* us." Our own Emerson, thirty years ago, when the heat of reaction from Christian dogmatism around him was at its height, and he seemed farther from sympathy with

Christian thought than he has appeared in his riper days, wrote such words as these: "Man is a stream whose source is hidden. Our being is descending into us from we know not whence. * * I am constrained every moment to acknowledge a higher origin for events than the will I call mine. As with events so is it with thoughts. When I watch that flowing river, which, *out of regions I see not*, pours for a season its streams into me, I see that I am a pensioner; not a cause, but a surprised spectator of this ethereal water. That I desire and look up, and put myself in the attitude of reception, but from some alien energy the vision comes. * * * A wise old proverb says, 'God comes to us without bell;' that is, as there is no screen or ceiling between our heads and the infinite heaven, so is there no bar or wall in the soul where man, the effect, ceases, and God, the cause, begins. The walls are taken away. We lie open on one side to the deeps of spiritual nature, to the attributes of God." Words without significance till we read in them essentially Christ's doctrine of the ever-present and helping Spirit of God. I could wish he had made them warmer with personal love. I fear they will hardly reach the hearts of children under fifty of average mental breadth. They are not for the many. They are less simple than the words of Jesus, less profound, less comprehensive. They speak to the abstract intellect, and not as the great Teacher's, to the whole soul. They contemplate passive reception of the Divine influence, not reciprocal or re-

sponsive communion. They promise no "*fellowship* of the Spirit." Yet for those who can receive them they mean nothing less than "Immanuel," God with us.

We are living, then, every moment in the presence of spiritual Reality. It ought not to be with our eyes shut. We ought to see. That which is so near, which is kindred to our spirit, the source of our best life, the measure and blessing of whose influence depends upon our recognition and *voluntary* reception, ought not to be held as a distant expectation or a vague perhaps. But let no one imagine that the effort to discern the realities of the Spirit will put one on the watch for phenomena of the senses, or for moods of feeling that come of our mercurial physical sensibilities. These are of the earth earthy. They are of the body, not of the Spirit. We need not expect to see a ghost. One pities the shallow conceit which thinks it hears signs of spiritual presence and power in the dry clatter of the material, or feels them in those exaltations of bodily sensibility which might just as well come of wine or opium. This is mere surface. The Spirit goes deeper. He reveals spiritual things to the spirit. He *abides* in the soul. He is known there as health is known in the body, by permanent condition. "The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Where these are God abides. These are His attributes and activities. The life of that soul which feels and radiates these has God at the center. The proof that God dwells

within is to be found, not in any transient ecstasy or happy feeling, but in the steady reign of these virtues in heart and life. No experience however brilliant, no rapture however ecstatic, that, passing away, does not leave these solid virtues regnant over all lusts of the flesh and spirit, affords the least evidence that God has even paid a visit to the soul, much less taken up his abode therein. No wonders that amaze the senses, however startling, have any tendency in themselves to produce these fruits of the Spirit; they oftener create a prurient craving for more startling wonders as stimulants to keener sensations. The mind is diverted from truth and duty to stand in gaping wonder. The good purpose grows fickle. The nerves are strained into morbid irritability. The excitement of the senses over "phenomena" usually acts as a stimulant to the "works of the flesh." Moreover, no degree of emotion tends in itself to awaken or establish the virtues of the Spirit. Feeling does not make the heart true. Even good feeling, gushing with benevolence, easily degenerates into puling sentimentalism. It overflows with tender demonstrations, but when you touch its principle with temptation, test its conscience, or irritate its temper with opposition, you discover how empty and selfish and essentially false it is—a mere hot vapor that falls flat and powerless at the first touch of a condensing chill. The melting philanthropist turns savage and burns to torture those he cannot sway. The fire of feeling does not evidence the Spirit. It depends on the

nature of the heat. The most intense is not likely to be the most permanent. When God comes to the soul in the Divine gift of the Spirit, the good will He inspires is comprehensive of all—the opponent who thwarts as well as the ally who helps, the enemy that curses, as well as the friend that caresses. God's charity is not partial. And the characteristic of the faith which receives and cherishes the Holy Spirit as the indwelling Guest and Guide, is that it *makes the idea of God the ideal of human love and duty*. It binds the conscience to that ideal. It exacts of itself a love like that of the Father in Heaven, who maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good. It cannot be satisfied with less. It condemns itself for every secret motion within of a contrary spirit. God is there as witness. It recognizes His presence. It feels that God loves men in its love; and if it does not love them as He loves, it is resisting the Holy Spirit. The very power of faith to raise men to a higher moral and spiritual life is largely in this fact, that it holds them in its secret thought and desire, as well as in external act, to this divine ideal. It is the very perfection of truth and justice and honor and honesty and love identified with the sense of God's being and presence in the soul. The abiding supremacy of these virtues is the witness of the Spirit within. The permanent condition is the fullest demonstration, not the exaltation of the emotions. The presence and power of the Spirit may be as grandly manifest in the deliberate struggle with temptation, the feelingless perseverance in un-

pleasant duty, or the severe calm under the long wear of adversity, as in the most rapt ecstasy of contemplation or prayer. The *cold-blooded* refusal to do wrong or perseverance in the good way, because the idea of God is the ideal of duty and life, is often the very sublimity of inspiration. To see God in emotion and not see Him in conscience and purpose, is to see substance in fog and deny it in land and rock.

We are never to think of the action of the Holy Spirit in us as separate from our own action. The Divine and the human blend. Our faculties are organs for the Spirit. The power is from above, but the reception and acting forth of the Divine energy depends upon us. God works in us to will and to do, yet we work out our own salvation. The soul draws its life from the Spiritual as really as the body draws its life from the material. Unless you plow and sow and provide bread, and feed the body, it cannot perform its functions. It lives by bread. Yet when the body does its work you never say that it is the food that acts. It eats and assimilates and makes its bread a vital part of itself, and on the strength thus drawn from nature fulfils its office. In a coarse way this may symbolize our dependence on God. By self-restraint and self-denial we put away the temptations that would feed our souls on poison. In our prayer and our search after truth we ask the bread of Heaven. The Holy Spirit is the answer. "We eat angel's food." We assimilate the Divine gift. "We are made partakers of the Divine na-

ture." The spirit of God becomes, in a sense, a vital part of our own spiritual powers, to the extent we are able to receive, so that when the holy aspirations and affections rise within us they are our own, and when the good purpose goes forth on its errand of divine love it is our purpose. We act out the energies that God pours into our being and powers. That spiritual unity which is contemplated in the prayer of Jesus is realized: "As thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us. And the calm sense of power and of rest that makes such a faith strong is the consciousness of this indwelling of God. There is a sense of dependence, but it is a weakness that leans on Omnipotence. "When I am weak then am I strong."

This intimacy of union and absolute dependence of the soul upon the Divine influence lend a fearful significance to those scriptures which warn us against resisting the Holy Spirit. To refuse where we know that God commands, to indulge where we are sure that He must frown, to will where the conscience warns us He has forbidden—this is to break the union with the Source of life, and feed on poison in the place of bread. It is to court spiritual weakness and death. "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." To resist is to rivet our own fetters. It is treachery to our own liberty and life.

Another important inference follows here: The capacity of inspiration, or one's measure of the Spirit, depends

largely upon one's own endeavor. Like every power of the mind it is capable of education. It begins in weakness; if rightly cultured, it grows to power. The Divine Spirit is eternally one and the same; but human capacity to receive His influence varies indefinitely. "He touches hallowed lips with fire," but they are never the lips of an idiot. God never gives his deepest messages of truth to men from the tongue of a child. The child may be our teacher, but it is from his artless unconsciousness, rather than any distinct grasp and utterance of truth. The child will "speak as a child," even though taught of the Spirit. The manifestations of the Spirit in the young will be colored by the qualities of youth. The thought of divine things in a mind that is mature in holy contemplation and experience will differ from the thought of the novice in religion, as the thought of mathematics in the mind of a Newton differs from the thought of one who has just learned to add simple numbers. Both are correct; but the one comprehends the whole range of the principles of the science, the other only its most primary truth. We shall look in vain for lives that will move before us, under the fullest guidance of the indwelling Spirit, until we cease to expect the divine power to come in flashes of light or arbitrary and sudden gifts of grace, and learn that we must prepare the way for His largest coming by a life-long education of our own hearts.

This doctrine of the Spirit is also a very practical one

for the life that now is. As we are living in the spirit world and dealing with spiritual realities at every step along the path of our life, the Holy Spirit comes to abide in us as a present guide, a monitor of temper in our everyday affairs. God aims to fit us for living in the present, not for living in the future, for which we do not yet need to be fit. Our work is here. Our relations to spiritual powers are here. Our duties are here. What we need to know is how to regulate the temper and order the conduct aright here. The faith that is so lofty and ethereal that it cannot attend vigorously to the work-day duties of home and trade and neighborly kindness, is a little too high for earth and quite too low for heaven. It keeps company with the coffin of the Arabian Prophet, suspended midway between the two, and as having to do mainly with the dead were better buried with them. The religion which the living need must be ready for solid service here. Our faith in the spiritual will doubtless contemplate the present existence of all the good that have lived in the past ages of the world; it will not doubt that Abraham and Moses and Isaiah and Paul and John are living and doing God service somewhere in the universe at this moment; God is not a God of the dead but of the living; but our individual relation to these distinguished personages, so far as God permits us to know, is of the least possible consequence. It is idle to waste thought in guesses upon that matter. Our relations to our next-door neighbor, and to the trader of whom we buy, and to the cus-

tomers to whom we sell, and to the inmates of our own home, are of the utmost consequence now. And it is to fit us for our right part in these relations that God's Spirit is promised to abide in us. To think toward those who are thus near us as we believe God thinks, to feel toward them as God feels, to act toward them as we believe God would act if he were in our place in very deed, to make the idea of God thus the ideal of our own temper and life, is the good for which we most need the Holy Spirit. And most solemn and searching is the thought that as we deal every day by others God's Spirit deals by us. By a law that is self-executing, that never remits, never postpones its award, we are becoming according as we think and act in these near relations to those around us. With the judgment wherewithal we judge are we judged. Just according to the spirit we bear within us is the ever-present working of the Spirit of God or the spirit of evil, penetrating and shaping the inmost life of the heart.

Finally: the influence and power of religion in men will be just according as they hold vitally in their faith and practically for their conduct, this doctrine of the Holy Spirit. It is the substance of religion. It is the one central truth of faith. Real faith which does not include or comprehend it there cannot be. "I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God and they shall be my people," was the promise of old. When Jesus came, his deepest word but reiterated and expanded this promise: "If a man love me he will keep my words, and my

father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him;" "I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of Truth." God dwelling in man and man dwelling in God, living consciously in the divine Life—this is the truth of truths. It is comprehensive of all good. There is no ignorance for which it is not light, no sorrow for which it is not comfort; no weakness for which it is not strength; no joy or strength or wisdom or prosperity of the soul for which it is not the security of permanence. It is the one most central distinction of man from the lower orders of life. It is his crown of glory. God in man and man in God, making the idea of God the ideal of man, and rising ever into higher realizations of that ideal—this is the whole substance of meaning, if we can interpret Him, in the Person of Jesus. It comprehends the whole truth which his life and cross aim to impress. It is religion. And it is *the religion* for universal humanity; shut up within no creed, limited to no time or place, bound to no rite or ceremony, the monopoly of no sacred order or caste, wherever God and a human heart are together there is present everything essential to its highest worship. Man has no completeness without this truth—in it the divinest completeness. It is the reason of prayer, the joy of praise, the life and substance of worship—all worship but dumb show or meaningless sound till this truth is its inspiration. Glorious will be that day when men shall drop all debate over the uncertain and unsettled, and center the whole thought and aspiration of their religion upon this one truth of the abiding Spirit—God in man and man in God.

The Resurrection.

John v: 28, 29: Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment.

With the aim in the present discussion of attaining to the real thought of Jesus respecting the resurrection, it will not be necessary or profitable to spend time over the question of the literal raising of the body, the identical flesh and bones which we carry here. It would be a waste of words. Such literal resurrection no longer commands the respect of intelligent faith. We are not distressed with the perplexity of the Sadducees who came to Jesus with the problem what was to be done in the resurrection with so many bodies when a woman had had seven husbands. The chief concern with us is to learn what becomes of the souls.

Let us also dismiss as equally puerile the idea of a mechanical resurrection, or the arbitrary interference of any form of external force or power to bring the soul up from the dead. The evidence that banishes the idea of a mechanical creation of man, and compels us to see him coming forth from the Divine hand in the order of law, insures the early disappearance of all such artificial notions of the resurrection. No special exertion of the divine power is needed. The rising up of the soul at the disso-

lution of the body is as natural as birth. When nature has advanced through her prescribed course of changes and the hour strikes, this event comes as manly strength comes to the full-grown body, or as wrinkles and gray hairs come to old age; it is a part of the soul's history or life. It comes of forces inherent in the human constitution. This is in entire harmony with the teachings of Jesus and his Apostles, when fairly interpreted, and also agrees with the preintimations of the life to come in human experience.

It may be inferred, therefore, that the resurrection is an inseparable incident of the soul's existence, that there are forces and powers in the very constitution of our being that survive the death of the body as naturally as the life of the seed-grain, to use the famous illustration of Paul, goes into the sprouting germ and survives the dissolution of that grain; that each will rise into the spirit life identically the same being that dwelt in the body here, bearing the same character and qualities, intellectual, social, moral and spiritual, that were acquired in the body; hence that there will be the same limitless variety of character in the world to come that we witness here, all the grades of good and evil that we see passing out of the life on earth, all beginning there as they left off here; pure and loving and aspiring to nobler heights of holy attainment if such was their temper among men, vicious and hateful and loving to do mischief if such a spirit had been the growth of their earthly life. In the words of the text,

"They that have done good shall come forth unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment or condemnation." To what glory the good may advance in their progress, or to what lower depths of animal stupidity and darkness the evil may descend, we cannot say; but grant the continuance of personal identity and the admission carries with it an evidence amounting to moral certainty that there passes into the life to come, essentially unchanged, all that vast variety of moral condition, all those grades of good and evil, that we witness as the final product of the discipline of life on earth. We can see no power in death to radically change the moral status or likings or tendencies of the soul. The resurrection is *continued* life. The outward conditions will doubtless be different, but that inward life of the spirit which goes far to determine what outward conditions shall be to us, is the same. Those who wake from death will be themselves still.

But here the question with which Paul had to deal meets us, "With what body do they come?" Not this mortal flesh, insists the Apostle with emphasis. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." Not the body that dies is the body "that shall be," he again enforces with his illustration of the growing grain. This but affirms what Jesus implies when he says that in the resurrection "they are as the angels of God;" and again, "I am the resurrection and the life." What sense these latter words could bear, as applied to the reorganizing of

the dust of the body, we are unable to see. And when we take into view the well known facts connected with the sustenance, growth and dissolution of the body, changing every constituent particle several times during an average life, as it does, and often giving up its life at last only to become a part of other living organisms, we wonder at the violence done to reason as well as to language in the interpretation which has extorted a material resurrection from the teachings of Jesus and Paul.

And yet we must believe there will be a body. We cannot conceive of a spirit existing separate from form. As the metaphysician will tell you, a finite spirit cannot be omnipresent; cannot fill infinite space. It must be *somewhere*. This is to say that it must occupy in space a definite position in relation to all other objects in space. It must have dimensions, greater or less. Dimensions imply shape or form. And form that is not a mere vacuum or *nothing* implies substance that has outline in space. Hence we are prepared to accept that inspiration of Paul which tells us that there is a "spiritual body" (*soma pneumatikon*), in contradistinction to the natural body (*soma psuchikon*); that over this spiritual body the death that dissolves the natural hath no power, but when nature puts off this "body of corruption," the spirit that is vital with the principle of eternal life will be clothed with a body incorruptible; "for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality; and so shall be brought to pass the saying that is written,

‘Death is swallowed up in victory!’” Once grant the continued life of the spirit, and no sounder word of reason ever came from human lips.

In regard to the nature of this spiritual body, it would be over-curious to inquire. We may well believe that in the complex nature of man is a third force or element which our science calls neither matter nor mind, which no scalpel or microscope or most searching chemical analysis ever reveals, which counts for nothing on the scales, but which, more subtle than electricity, more enduring than adamant, yea, possibly as eternal as the being of God himself, the life of the spirit weaves into a garment and shapes into an instrument for the immortal part in its celestial activities, by a law as natural and uniform as that under which the physical life builds and molds the body for our services on earth. And so “God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him.” This may well be one of those things in heaven and earth of which our philosophy has never dreamed. Even now the foremost investigators in physics are telling us that there must be some hidden force or universal ether, filling all space, undetected and unmeasured by any of their scientific methods, yet absolutely necessary to account for some of the most common phenomena that meet our eyes. The argument against immortality in the plea that no substance save that which is liable to dissolution can serve as organ and form for the eternal life of the spirit, is merely the assumption of ignorance. What did the world know of the universal force

of gravity before the time of Sir Isaac Newton? Who suspected the presence of such elements as electricity and magnetism in nature four or five generations ago? And who shall say that tomorrow will not discover still greater wonders in the Creation, of whose mysteries we have just begun to learn a little? True science is to be respected always, but when it travels beyond experience and assumes to affirm or deny where it can only *guess*, it ceases to be science; and the faith that communes with God will rest in the assurance that the instincts of the divine life it feels within are a truer and safer guide.

It was necessary to notice the questions I have touched upon in the discussion of this subject. The history of the doctrine and the position in which it has left the popular mind, makes the demand. Yet we do well to remember that our knowledge at present of the external and incidental conditions of the life beyond the grave, can be but partial and very inadequate. It doth not yet appear what we shall be. It does not need to appear. It is safe for us to wait till time and change shall reveal what shall be in the life hereafter, if only we give due heed to what we may certainly know of the resurrection life as it is shaping itself within us now. This brings us to the practical part of our subject.

One of the truths of highest practical importance for this age to consider is the fact that we make our own future, and that we are making it every day. It will be no arbitrary creation. No force will crush us into an evil

condition which we have not prepared for ourselves and made inevitable by our own voluntary action and choice. No power external to our own being can raise us out of such a condition into its opposite, and fill us with the blessedness of a holy state. The immutable terms of moral action and character seal this certainty. If we make a bad future for ourselves, it will be our own fault. God will not be to blame. It will not be because He did not place opportunity and aid within our reach to make it otherwise. If we make a good future for ourselves, it will be only by the right voluntary use of those opportunities and aids which, under God, lie open to our choice. No chance decides the issue. No power of malevolence or benevolence forces it, nor can. We are the arbiters of our own destiny.

The life of the resurrection is growing within us now. We are shaping its results every day. Our choices, our pleasures, our business, our ruling passion, all those activities of body and mind that organize themselves in our being as fixed habit, character and tendency, are molding the creatures we are to be. Not less certainly does the life at work in the cocoon or chrysalis determine the creature that will ere long break forth into the light and air, than the moral life that is acting in us now determines what sort of beings will emerge from our dissolving bodies. The life that is in harmony with the highest laws of our being, that grows strong in noble effort to do right and to do good in the world, must come forth in the like-

ness of the Son of God. A life that rends those laws as if they were but cobwebs drawn across the path of its impatient desires and passions, that deranges the whole being with its excesses—that bad life can come forth only in a dark contrast. And every one in his degree between these extremes, according as he lives here. This is hardly more than the assertion of continued personal identity.

So Jesus is but speaking out of the very heart of reason and nature when He proclaims the resurrection life a present reality: "Verily, Verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, *and now is*, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." The hour is now ; the dead hear now ; the hearer lives now. Again : "He that believeth on me *hath* everlasting life;" and again, "He that heareth my word and believeth on Him that sent me, *hath* everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but *is passed* from death unto life." Lucke, an acute German interpreter, says of this : "If a higher kind of life, a resurrection process, prior to bodily death, is represented by '*hath*' and '*is passed*,' then *life* and *everlasting life* are not to be understood of a life that begins after physical death, but of the true and eternal Messianic life, which begins even here." The celebrated Meyer makes this comment : "The believer already possesses eternal life in this world, that is, in the temporal development of that moral and blessed life which is independent of death, and which will rise to its highest perfection and glory at the coming of Christ."

Tholuck adds these words : "To him who by faith in Christ has obtained entrance into an inward communion of life with him—to him death is no interruption, but only a completion of his existence." Paul, in like language, speaks of a present resurrection as the prize for which he was running the Christian race, "That I may know him (Christ) and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his suffering, being made conformable to his death, if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which I also am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended—*i. e.*, to have attained the perfection of the resurrection life; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Jesus was his ideal, "The Resurrection and the Life" to him now; not a life that was to be given him in some future day, but beginning now; not an event in which he was to be passive, but an attainment for which he must struggle; not the work of another *upon* him, but a growing life within him; not a gift thrown to him, but a prize to be won by him. He was struggling to realize his ideal, to be a perfectly Christ-like man. The life begins here, culminates in eternity; just when, in date of time, we cannot tell—just when, in date of character, the soul becomes perfectly like Christ.

Now, let us consider how this life, which we should struggle to attain, manifests itself, and the care it needs to give it a full and healthy growth.

We all know that there is a natural life within us that must decay. It is a good life that God has given us for the time, but it feeds on the perishable, and must perish like that which sustains it. The senses of the body early reach the climax of their strength. The zest of food is keenest in childhood; the eye is clearest in youth; the ear will detect every sound at ten that it can at fifty, and many that it cannot at seventy. The life of the senses must decline. Nature writes their doom. Cherish them ever so carefully, refine them to ever so exquisite a delicacy, by and by lethargy and numbness come over them. The eye grows dim, the ear dull, and no dainty can tease the palate into zest. So of a whole world of pleasures that depend upon the spring and vigor of the senses—the feast, the dance, the ride, the gatherings for social chat and mirth, even the excitements of pecuniary gain and the exultations of successful ambition. These wear out. The time comes when the quiet corner at home is better than all of them. Good for their uses by the way, essential in their place, they are nevertheless stamped with decay. They are of that life of nature which must die. But we know as well that there is a life of the spirit which only increases in the keenness of its sensibility and relish for its objects as the years grow into old age. It may lie dormant in early years, it may fail to be quickened, it may

be smothered under excesses of worldliness; but it is a life which every heart knows that consecrates itself in any degree to the pure service of humanity. It wakes in the love that goes forth to do good. It is the life which that noble minister of Boston feels when he says that he cannot live without his poor. It is the life which many a pastor feels glowing in every sensibility of his being as he turns away from some abode of want or suffering with the consciousness that he has poured the balm of healing sympathy into some crushed heart, or spoken words that cheer the gloom or rouse the good hopes and energies of some souls that were sinking into darkness. It is the life that Florence Nightingale felt like a warm light of Heaven diffusing its radiance through the hospitals of sick and wounded soldiers, attracting her to her toils amid those scenes of suffering with a charm stronger than the devotee of pleasure ever felt in ball-room or theater, making the home of groans and unsightly miseries the source of a higher joy to her beautiful spirit than ever came from the place of song and laughter. It is conscious affinity with God, the Infinite Goodness. It is not a belief that it shall live; it is living. And it lives more and more. Its good work gives it an appetite that never palls. The joy in a deed that puts a song in a sad human heart is not less, but more, than it was in the same act ten years ago. Such repetition never wearies, but stimulates. Wash the reek of his low contact from the body and soul of the inebriate, and see him stand up a man once

more, and will you not be the readier to do the same kindness for another in the same case? Teach the ignorant, awaken the vicious to holy purposes, see the divine life in them growing into established character, and will not the reward you feel draw you on to higher endeavors? It is the banquet of God, to which no one who tastes ever needs new invitation. This life grows with years; and when the active powers have failed, and old age has nothing but love to give, the heart is a fountain of Divine goodness, that pours forth its streams in larger volume than ever before. There is nothing so divine as love to give. Love is the life that gives itself. It is an immortal youth. And so this life of love, the blessed present resurrection, which only enlarges as the body wears out with years and service, triumphs over death, and at last passes upward to its larger and freer sphere of activity.

For, it is to be noticed, this life knows itself as the victory over death. It feels that it cannot die. Death is not real; it is "abolished." The fear of death is but the child's fear of the dark. This life knows that no form of darkness can hide a danger in which it will not be as safe as in the clearest light. Every place is as safe as where it now is. Let the body crumble; let the fever burn out its poor life, or consumption waste its vigor, or the bullets of an enemy riddle its heart, or the poisonous vapors of the burning mine, a thousand feet below the pure air and sunlight, smother its breath, or the sudden explosion rend limb from limb—these can no more touch that inward

life than the rocket exploding in the night sky can wound the moon. It is hidden in God. It is bound up in the Divine Life. It is as safe from harm as the heart of God Himself.

Under this view, how plain the essential question of our destiny becomes ! We know, if we will but consider, whether we are living only in that life of nature which must die, or in that life of the spirit, that life of duty and love, which rises in ever-growing strength toward God, its source. We know to what the one and the other must come. We have only to make our choice. And so no words could more fitly close the discussion of this great theme than those with which Paul impresses its final practical lesson : "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

The Judgment Day.

John vii, 48: He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in that day.

If the idea of the final judgment here announced could be flashed suddenly upon the minds of many Christians, it would startle them. That they are in the last day, that the word of Christ is now judging them, that the process of separation, "one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats," is now going on, and that each is moving to the right hand or the left by the very working of the word of truth within him, according as he receives or rejects, is a thought that has never crossed their minds. Their religious training has never impressed it; their own reflection and experience have never suggested the truth. Yet, if I have been able to study the sayings of Jesus on this subject to any purpose, this is precisely the idea he meant to convey. In the place of this truth, that goes to the conscience like a swift arrow, a present, practical force, the church has for ages treated her children to an outward scene, an imposing pageant, stimulating to the artistic imagination, but robbed of all spiritual influence by its external pomp terrorizing the senses, and of all practical force by being postponed indefinite

ages into the future. Most of you will readily recognize the picture as it was thrown upon my boyish imagination by the preaching to which I listened, and lingered there with the tenacity of early impressions far into my later years—a vast amphitheater, whose breadth would crowd back the bordering hills of the widest plain, gathering within it all the generations of time, just called up by the judgment trumpet from the sleeping dust, a countless throng, a shoreless sea of human faces; at one side towering a throne of terrific splendor; on it seated the awful form of the Almighty Judge, his head white with dreadful glory, his eyes flaming with fires that burn into every soul, a hushed silence upon all those myriads, each waiting in trembling suspense as one by one is called forth, the old, the middle-aged, the child, the infant, each in turn compelled to answer; not one allowed to escape; even the holiest saints trembling under the ordeal: out of the open books, containing the record of “the deeds done in the body,” each soul reads the verdict, “Come, ye blessed,” or “Depart, ye cursed,” and, bowing to the inexorable decree, passes to the right hand or to the left; the scene laid somewhere in the upper ether; time gone, eternity begun, and, to complete the picture, this old earth, on the last round in its distant orbit, dry and ripe for doom by ages of sin, hangs burning in the lurid flames of the last conflagration. You know how pulpit sensationalists have used this Apocalyptic imagery, with all the terrific variations their inventive imaginations could lend. Your own young

nerves have probably quivered with momentary fright before its lurid colors. Literalized from the Oriental imagery of the Bible, you looked upon it as painted by the finger of God. It came to you as bearing the seal of divine authority. It did not occur to your young thoughts to question the ludicrous absurdities in the stupendous fiction—the time it would take for the grand session to dispose of all the cases that had been accumulating on the docket, at the rate of sixty a minute, one every second, through all the centuries of history; the lawyer's task it would be for each waiting spectator to grasp and profit by the voluminous testimony, and the weariness of standing out the interminable trials. But the world has grown old enough to ask these questions, which our young minds did not think to ask. Religion is suffering from the exposure of these transparent fictions with which her teachers have so long frightened the world. We must come back to reason and common sense. It is safe to say that Jesus had no such impossible absurdity in mind with his imagery of the last day. Blundering interpreters may mistake figure for fact, and see a pageant where the speaker or writer saw only a truth or idea; but the *originating* mind always knows whether it is dealing in imaginations or in literal description. Jesus was not one to amuse his hearers with empty words on such a theme. Let us inquire what he did mean:

I. In regard to the date of the last day. The Son of Man was to be revealed from Heaven, to come in his

kingdom, come to reign, come to judge the world. When? On one occasion, the disciples, in amazement at the assertion that not one stone of their magnificent temple should be left upon another, pointedly asked the teacher: "Tell us, when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world?" In answer, Jesus first cautioned them to be on their guard against deceivers, and then, with the annunciation of commotions and miseries that should overwhelm the nation, more withering than old Prophet had ever denounced upon the back-sliding people, he limited the date with this emphatic close: "Verily, I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." Turn to any reliable commentator on these passages, and he will tell you that "the end of the world," or æon, as here used, means simply the end of the age or dispensation, according to the prevailing belief among the Jews that the Messiah would bring that dispensation to a close, and inaugurate a new age of far happier conditions to their nation. Hence Olshausen says: "We do not, therefore, scruple to accept the simple explanation which alone suits the text, that Christ speaks of his coming as coincident with the destruction of Jerusalem and with the downfall of the Jewish state." This corresponds with the signs of his coming, for which the disciples asked. When the Gospel had been preached through all the nations then known; when the abomination of desolation, the standard of the victorious Roman legions, was borne in triumph into the Holy Place;

when the stones of the temple were thrown down, and the plough-share driven through the very foundations on which they rested; when the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the old temple-worship made an impossibility, then the end came—the old dispensation was no more, the last day began. It is needless to dwell further on the minutiae of evidence. We are in that day; the judgment is set; the books are opened; the process is going forward; the decisions of that day are being immutably settled.

II. We inquire in regard to the nature of the judgment. *Krisis* is the word. It means separation. To judge is to separate. Bear that fact in mind. As a mental act, judgment separates or discriminates the true from the false in testimony, the like from the unlike in science or philosophy, the good from the evil in morals. In the court of civil justice, judgment separates the wrong from the right, and awards satisfaction to the wronged. In the criminal court, it separates the guilty from the innocent, and its sentence, carried into execution, literally separates the criminal from the law-abiding, and shuts up the former with their own kind. Separation is the undertone of meaning that runs through every application of the word. Jesus says: "In the last day, the word that I speak shall judge him that receiveth it not and rejecteth me." My word is his judge. No other is needed. It tries him, convicts him, sentences him, and carries the sentence into execution by separating him from the good. How? By

the natural and inevitable effect of rejected truth upon the mind and heart. No external force is needed, no machinery of justice, no formality of trial, no sheriff or jailer or prison walls. Just speak the truth, and let it have its way with the soul, and the judgment is accomplished.

Let me illustrate this by an incident. Some years ago, as I was passing an Indian encampment in company with a missionary who had become well acquainted with their habits and social life, I asked him, "Do you find the same variety of character or the wide difference in moral grade among those Indians that you meet in civilized society?" "By no means," was his reply. "There are individual differences of talent and temper. For example, Deer-foot there has a little more energy than Sleepy-eye, and Watch-dog is a little less savage and cruel than Springing-cat; but, take them together, they are all just about alike. They hunt the same game, practice the same rude arts, have the same amusements, eat the same food, the women all bear the same drudgery, and the men all indulge in the same vices." "Then there is no depraved class among them, expelled from respectable society by their exceptional badness?" "None." "No outcasts?" "None." "No criminals that they fetter or shut in prison for the public safety?" "No; if one is sharp and energetic enough to commit daring crimes, they are about as apt to praise and promote and try to imitate as they are to punish him." "Well, if you preach the Gospel to these savages, some will receive, some reject. The believers will grow better;

the rejecters will remain as they are or grow worse. Will not this create the moral antagonism, differences, grades, or variety of character that are now absent?" "Unquestionably. We cannot hope that all will receive the Gospel; if some would not, we should have no motive to preach to them." "And thus from the very word of Christ which you speak to them, diverse moral sympathies spring into being; mutual repulsions grow stronger year by year, ever widening out the moral distance that separates the unlike classes." "Yes, in some sense," half-protestingly assented my friend; "but the true convert could not refuse to associate with his old companions. The Gospel does not extirpate natural affection, and the love of God must teach him to go down to the degraded, as Jesus mingled with publicans and sinners, that he may win them and raise them up." "Yes, no doubt, while there is hope," I replied; "yet he will only be 'among them, not of them.' And must not their growing antipathies of moral taste, as opposite as light and darkness, pushing them ever farther apart, at last make it apparent that they can never dwell together as congenial spirits?" "Ay, indeed!" was the reply; "and that looks like nothing less than the bridgeless gulf of separation." Well, then, I asked my friend, and I ask you who hear me to-day, what is that but *judgment by the word* which Jesus has spoken? What is it but a single example of a worldwide fact—the "natural selection" of religion, sorting the good from the bad by a law as uniform and inevitable as

that which separates oil from water. The response of the moral nerve to the touch of the truth decides the matter. The antipathies of taste, of sentiment, of every principle of association, which the truth creates in those who receive it, just as certainly send them apart from those who reject, as lambs fly from wolves or doves from hawks. Their natures become opposites. They refuse to be together. Force them by external constraint to remain in each other's presence, and they are not together; they are at moral antipodes. They are apart by the whole diameter of the moral world. No third power thrusts any bars of separation between them; the truth simply does its work in the heart and conscience of some, is forbidden to do it in others, and the judgment is accomplished. Moral affinities are decided. The congenial cling together; the uncongenial turn away from each other.

"Nor less the eternal poles
Of tendency distribute souls.
These need no vows to bind
Whom not each other seek, but find.
They give and take no pledge or oath—
Nature is the bond of both."

And so the Word of Jesus proves the magnet of character, separating the sand from the gold. It reveals the evil in men as the touch of Ithuriel's spear, according to Milton, detected the subtle and masked arch-deceiver, "squat like a toad," at the ear of our first mother. The sense of sin starts up in shame, and shrinks away from the presence and the sight of the innocent. Every one may hear, if

he will "lay his ear intently down over the beating of his own heart," the clear voice of the Infinite Judge pronouncing upon every moral act His approval or condemnation. No form or pageant is needed. The trial and the verdict and the execution all go on in the silence of the secret soul. Each judges himself.

III. Some suggestions that spring naturally from this view:

1. The judgment which fixes our final state is not the decision of another or sentence passed upon us, but a self-determined process within ourselves. It begins when the first claim of truth awakens the conscience. It advances with every newly awakened feeling of obligation. Never is the voice within heard bidding us, "Go, work in the vineyard of duty;" or, "Withhold thy hand and thy thought from evil;" but our response is *separating* us from the evil or from the good, moving us toward the company at the right or toward the company at the left of the great white Throne. "Come," or "Depart," is the immediate echo to our answer. No matter how small the duty—to give the cup of cold water, to speak a kindly word or suppress a bitter one, to check the momentary craving for some hurtful dainty, or strangle the indulgence that is beginning to weave the snare of enslaving habit, to confess a fault, or pluck the vanity that thinks too much of self to care much for others—life is made up of small occasions, not of grand crises, and the decision upon each goes into the bias of moral sensibility, tones

the conscience, and does just so much to create those spiritual attractions and repulsions that place the soul in its moral companionship as certainly as gravitation fixes the place of the planet among the stars. Oh, careless mortal, awake to the tremendous significance of the present moment! You are in the presence of the Almighty Judge! You are shaping His decision by your own upon the duty of the moment. Think not of a postponed judgment, lying uncounted ages in the future, so far away that it cannot seem a reality which much concerns you now. You are now on trial; the verdict on your life is now being made up. Every moral act swells the testimony for or against you. The momentous issue advances apace toward irrevocable settlement. The companionship of eternity is gathering around you in the choices of the hour.

I am aware that the textual critic will remind me of the sacred Scripture, "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment," and that Jesus himself declares it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for certain cities of his own time—plainly implying that the judgment lies beyond this life. Enough to reply that the day is passing, but not closed; the process is going forward, but not ended. Not till human history ends, and the life beyond the grave shall have received its last accession from earth, can the account with all be closed and the result declared. This fact sufficiently accounts for the language referred

to. But for you and me, all the same, must the decision soon be settled—not by death, but by life; not at a point that may be determined by accident, but by choices of our own free will; not at an appointed date of time, but by a self-confirmed state of character.

2. We ought to forecast our own future in the ruling tendencies we can observe in ourselves in the present. Watch the forces at work within you—conscience in contact with the claims of truth, desire in contact with the world, the habitual bent of thought, the things that attract you most, the ends for which you are living, your ruling passion. Take the bearing of these forces. Compute carefully the value of the results to which they have brought you and are bringing you. Then, from the range of direction thus gained, throw your eye forward, and you can foresee the end. It will be the ripened present. Reflect, and you can say now whether you are willing to arrive at such a goal, or whether it would be wiser to change your course, and put your destiny in the hands of quite other forces. There is no contingency, no uncertainty, save in our refusal to foresee. God will not judge us by any *ex post facto* law, nor save us by any *ex post facto* salvation. Not more certainly can the astronomer, whose eye at the lens of his telescope follows the planet through a short arc of its orbit and measures its curve, tell the whole sweep of its revolution, than we can tell from our course in the present, if we will be at the pains to calculate, to what point the whole orbit of life will

bring us. We often wonder *where* we shall be in the world to come. Where are we now—not in space, but in purpose and ruling tendency, our moral “where?” Where are the days and the years, as they go by, bearing us? Answer that question, and unless some voluntary change bends our steps in some new direction, leading toward some new moral goal, our curious or anxious uncertainty may be at rest. We shall only be more of what we are.

3. This view disposes at once of the peculiar question which has agitated all the Christian centuries, as to what is to be done with the souls of the dead generations while awaiting the judgment of the last day. An “intermediate state” has been invented for their accommodation. They are shut up in Hades, say some—the good in Paradise or the pleasant upper story, the bad in Gehenna or the hot cellar, the final Heaven and Hell to be respectively higher and lower. Others insist on a suspension of conscious existence, a sleep of ages, a long spiritual syncope, from which the resurrection trumpet will startle the sleeping souls to life again—a loss of time for which we can hardly imagine any use. Such curious conceits would never have occurred to any mind, if the words of Christ had received their natural interpretation. The Swedish seer, Emanuel Swedenborg, teaches that there will be great *krises*, judgments, or periods of separation in the world to come, at which myriads and masses of souls, grown ripe for such a result by their demonstrated and

confirmed spiritual affinities, will be rapidly sifted and assigned to their final abodes and associations. For aught we can tell, this may be true. It would be analogous to many great crises in human history. But this would involve no long delay or suspense of all till earth had closed its history. We should still infer that as soon as each soul has reached its ripe state of character it is gathered to its own.

4. A most cheering hope springs up from the truth thus unfolded to view. No uncertainty clouds its light. Faith is conscious of holding in her hand the power to command the most desired award of the last day. This growing "life of God in the soul," coming more and more to be "partaker of the divine nature," cannot fall short of that holy companionship and fellowship which is its dearest desire. In the old view there was a weird atmosphere of unreality ever hanging over the picture of the final judgment, that either raised a secret suspicion that such an artificial scenic display could hardly be God's method of closing up accounts with this earth, or else produced the feeling that, as the result depended on the arbitrary will of another, the proverbial uncertainty attending the administration of justice in human courts, with their long, formal trials, would reach forward to this final assize, and the soul must simply take its chances with others. But here is placed under our own eyes the working of the forces that compel us to see that there is no *chance* in the case. Cause and effect do not wait on chance. Their

immutable order speaks to us in the voice of certainty. And here we not only see, but control—yea, *are*—the causes of the result. In the causes we can foresee the final end. There is no day of uncertain date, no dilatory formalities of trial, no contingency of the decision. We know what comes and must come from the motives under which we act and the influences to which we yield. Examples are ever before us. Conscience heeded in every act makes the honest man ; conscience often violated shows the confirmed knave. Appetite well regulated brings the blessings of temperance and self-control ; appetite over-indulged habitually never fails to reap its harvest of fevering congestions, shattered health, and will enslaved to animal cravings. Avarice, ruling the life for long years withers the generous sympathies and dries up the fountains of noble feeling and action. Benevolence, ever overflowing with deeds of kindness, enlarges its own heart, and blesses itself above the objects it blesses most. We know all this. It is the observed order of nature as seen in human experience. There is no uncertainty, no contingency. The reaping is as the sowing. We choose the harvest when we choose the seed.

And oh, if there be one attraction more fitted than another to draw the soul onward in holy endeavor, it must be the sure hope of mingling at last and forever in the communion which at once fills and enlarges every pure affection and divine aspiration. To be away from the misunderstandings, irritations, hostilities of congenial aims and tempers ; to let the heart go out in all

the largeness and joy of its love, with no fear of betrayal, no chill of distrust—in our better moments that rises as the dearest ideal of the “Saint’s Rest.” It is a privilege here to labor for the needy, to instruct the ignorant, to stretch out the helping hand to the fallen, no doubt; but every one will feel that Heaven would have little charm to draw us towards itself if it promised only the continued commingling of the evil with the good, and all that would be incident to that condition. If that had been the prospect, never would homesick souls, struggling against evil in the world and in themselves, have breathed forth their longings through so many ages in the sweet, plaintive old hymn :

O mother dear, Jerusalem,
When shall I come to thee?
When shall my sorrows have an end?
Thy joys, when shall I see?
O happy harbor of God’s saints!
O sweet and pleasant soil!
In thee no sorrows can be found,
No grief, no care, no toil!
My dear Redeemer is above,
Him will I go to see;
And all my friends in Christ below
Shall soon come after me.

Not ceasing from effort, but fullness of fellowship, is the joy for which the yearning spirit pants. And the word which Christ has spoken plainly says to us through the irreversible law of experience: Be worthy, and you will have your part with the worthy; be loving, and love will be your heart’s answer; be Christ-like, and you shall dwell forever with Christ.

The Real Point at Issue between Sacred and Secular Science.

Read before the Berkeley Club, of Oakland, Cal., Aug. 17, 1876.

The religious sentiment in man is a fact—a fact of universal experience. Its invariable manifestation points to some original attribute or inherent tendency of the human mind. Secular science has also its realm of fact and law, which observation and reflection compel us to recognize. Between this sentiment, as such, and the facts of this science, with their respective laws properly understood, there can be no conflict. Fact in nature cannot disagree with fact in experience. Indeed, it seems absurd to speak of any antagonism between sentiment and science. The one is the action of sensibility; the other, of intellect. The two have no factors, or qualities, or terms in common, through which a collision could be felt. We had as well speak of antagonism between a passion for music and the properties of the triangle, as of conflict between the *sentiment* of religion and any form of purely scientific thought.

But the human mind must inquire into the basis of this sentiment, frame some philosophy of its nature, define,

more or less clearly, certain beliefs for its support, and shape some intelligible system for its excitement and deliberate culture. This is the work of intellect; hence springs up, of necessity, a *science of religion*, having its realm of facts, real or assumed, and its regulative laws, as much as the science of physics. On this scientific side, religion shapes itself into terms of intellectual conception and expression which can feel the touch of any opposing elements in other science.

And here arises, through the limitations of human knowledge and mistaken reasoning, the liability to collision between an erroneous religious science and a true secular science on the one hand, or between an erroneous secular science and a true religious science on the other; or, finally, between the two when both are in error. Of course, truth can never conflict with truth, real science with other real science. But one could easily foresee, at this point, that the intellectual armatures of the two sciences would soon be heard fiercely clashing with each other. If sacred science assumes as fact, either in the sphere of spiritual being, history, or phenomena, anything which the advancing researches of secular science shall clearly negative, the latter must ere long serve a writ of error against her decisions, and insist that the case shall go to the supreme court of reason. Religion is substituting superstition for faith. She is using fiction instead of truth, or, at least, mingling the two, in the culture of her peculiar sentiment. Her intellectual work is not science,

but dogmatism; putting opinion, confidently asserted, in the place of established facts and principles. Happy will it be for her if she get wisdom to accept the aid of secular science in correcting her mistakes. If she stubbornly insist that her false assumptions are vital to true religious faith and worship, she will pay the penalty in seeing the best minds deserting her standard, leaving in her ranks only the ignorant and the unthinking.

On the other hand, if secular science leaves the field of demonstration, and assumes as established unproved data antagonistic to the fundamental facts of religion, it makes a mistake of the same nature as the former, and perhaps of a more mischievous tendency. It is false to its own principles and methods. It puts hypothesis in the place of demonstration. It calls assumptions science. It uses the intellect, not to cultivate, but to crush some of the dearest sentiments and hopes of human hearts. It is matter of grave doubt with many candid thinkers, whether it does not strike at the very life of the moral virtues.

The collision thus made possible has become actual—I need not say how or where. You are all aware that the battle thus far has raged mainly around questions respecting the *time* and *manner* of creation, the assertion of subsequent miraculous interventions by the Creator, and the *degree* rather than the *reality* of divine inspiration. It must be confessed that many assumptions which religion once thought it necessary to make on all these questions have been exploded by the progress of scientific

knowledge. But few of us now believe that the world was begun and finished within six times twenty-four hours, or that woman was manipulated into the creature she is out of a rib literally cut from the side of a man, or that the sun and moon stopped their revolutions at the word of a great captain, or that the prophet found marine hotel accommodations for three days and nights in the stomach of a fish. We discover truth no less clear and divine, and far less embarrassed by suggestions of doubt, in reading such marvelous stories as legend or poetry than in reading them as history.

But the conflicts over these questions seem to me to be mere skirmishes on the frontiers. They touch no vital matter. Whether victory or defeat settles on the one side or the other, nothing fundamental to the subject is determined. It is easy to see that religion can accept any correction of her mistakes which any possible discoveries of science in this direction may make. The war is not worth the powder. But secular science is now showing some disposition to carry the fight into the citadel. In some of its leaders it seems inclined to make assumptions which strike at the fundamental facts of all religion; which, indeed, if true, would call upon us to eliminate the religious sentiment from the human mind, because there would be no fact in the universe that could stand as a rational support of its existence, much less justify its deliberate culture.

Professor Ernst Haeckel, of Jena, Germany, in his

“History of Creation,” after setting in sharp contrast the view of the universe which regards the order of nature as the product of intelligent design, with that which looks upon it as the outcome of mechanical forces inherent in matter, holds this language: “We must decidedly adopt that view of the universe which is called the *mechanical* or *causal*. It may also be called the *monistic* or *single principle* theory, as opposed to the *two-fold principle* or *dualistic* theory, which is necessarily implied in the teleological conception of the universe.” [Vol. I, p. 20.] Again: “In opposition to the dualistic or teleological conception of nature, our theory considers organic, as well as inorganic bodies to be the necessary products of natural forces. It does not see in every individual species of animal and plant the embodied thought of a personal Creator, but the expression for the time being of a *mechanical process of development of matter*, the expression of a *necessarily active cause*—that is, of a *mechanical cause* (*causa efficiens*).” [Vol. I, p. 34.] And again, on page thirty-five: “Scientific materialism positively rejects every belief in the miraculous, and every conception, *in whatever form it appears*, of supernatural processes. Accordingly, nowhere in the whole domain of human knowledge does it recognize real metaphysics, but throughout only physics.” This is from a leader of scientific thought who counts a numerous following. The surpassing ability and real scientific value of his work will go far in commending his unscientific assumptions and speculations.

Professor Tyndall is a still more popular teacher in the English-speaking world. With less baldness of statement, but with more insinuating subtlety, in his famous Belfast address of two years ago,* he seems to commit himself freely to the same position. I refer to him here, not for the purpose of adding another to the many answers that have been attempted, but because he furnishes the best introduction to the thought I desire to present. Allow me to quote, in connection with the sentence which has provoked most criticism, the foregoing paragraph, by which he prepared the way for his grand climax. He is speaking of "the origination" of life. He says: "We break a magnet, and find two poles in each of its fragments. We continue the process of breaking, but however small the parts, each carries with it, though enfeebled, the polarity of the whole. And, when we can break no longer, we prolong the intellectual vision to the polar molecules. Are we not urged to do something similar in the case of life? Is there not a temptation to close to some extent with Lucretius, when he affirms that 'Nature is seen to do all things spontaneously of herself, without the meddling of the gods;' or with Bruno, when he declares that 'Matter is not that mere empty *capacity* which philosophers have pictured her to be, but the universal mother, who brings forth all things as the fruit of her own womb?' The questions here raised are inevitable. They are approaching us with accelerated speed; and it is not a

* See heading for date at which this article was read.

matter of indifference whether they are introduced with reverence or irreverence." Then follows the climax : "Abandoning all disguise, the confession I feel bound to make before you is, that I prolong the vision backward across the boundary of the experimental evidence, and discern in matter * * * the promise and potency of every form and quality of life."

Let us be reminded here again that Professor Tyndall is speaking, not of time or manner, but of "the origination of life." He would have no meddling of God with this ; he sees it springing spontaneously from the womb of matter as universal mother. I think I do him no injustice by this inference ; for if he has not quite formally indorsed this language, quoted from two famous authors, as interpreting his own, taking the whole connection, it is difficult to see how he could have intended anything else. The question at issue is thus taken out of the domain of methods or order of procedure in creation, and centers upon *the nature of the force that creates or evolves*. Is it *Intelligence*, working by foresight, aim, purpose, or is it some blind, unguided energy, pushing forth results, unconscious of what it is about ? This is the real issue ; the only one, as it seems to me, worth the trouble of trying out. If this creating or evolving force is Intelligence, working to a design, after the known laws of intelligence, then religion has *in nature* all the basis for her worship, and the culture of her proper sentiment, that she can ask. If it is some mole-like push-principle merely, "going it blind,"

then it is difficult to see what excuse an intelligent being can have for giving any scope to the religious faculty or feeling. An "absentee God," outside of creation, can never command the reverence of the human mind.

I can fully accept the language of Professor Tyndall, if he will allow me to put my meaning into his words. I too discern *in* matter the promise and potency of every form and quality of life. I call that promise and potency GOD—*Will, Thought, Intelligent Design*. I claim that he is not absent from, but *in* every atom of these evolving forces and phenomena—the potency, the law, the pre-determining agent of the result. But will any one pretend that this was what Professor Tyndall meant to say he discerned in matter? If so, why did he preface his assertion with unctious quotations about the spontaneous origination of life, dispensing with the meddling of God?

I cordially accept the doctrine of evolution, although not able to see the sufficiency of Mr. Darwin's account of that doctrine. I do not believe it possible for any well-balanced mind, trained in the rigid methods of science, to trace the links of the growing chain of animal life, link by link, from lower to higher, observing what is common to both, and the slight peculiarity that ranks the latter above the former in each case, without coming to believe fully in some genetic connection running through the whole chain. But does this exclude God, Will, Intelligence, and Purpose from all connection with this evolving order? Does it prove that He can not be both fountain and stream

in these ever onward-flowing forces? Is it more rational and *scientific* to say that "matter is the universal mother that brings forth all things as the fruit of her own womb?" Is there no *Father* in the case of these wonderful births of nature? Is Parthenogenesis, with nothing higher than virgin atoms, the *scientifically demonstrated* origin of this earth and all its multiform life? As the scientist looks beyond the boundary of the experimental evidence, does he really discern in matter, *apart from God*, or does he only *guess*, the potency of every form and quality of life? If the latter, he turns false to the ruling principle of his own method, which demands for such positively asserted conclusions, not guesses or opinion, but demonstration. We must be pardoned for not seeing the validity of such conclusions.

The question recurs to the *nature* of the force at work in this process of evolution. Is it Intelligence, or is it the blind push-principle?

It is necessary here, in order to reach an answer in any degree satisfactory, to first rid the mind of some, not only inadequate, but very misleading conceptions of God, and of his mode of working or self-manifestation. These are nearly universal in popular thought, and by no means uncommon among the educated. Let no one imagine that the assumption that a personal God is this creative force involves the idea of "broken efforts" or separate acts of creation, going by "fits and starts," in the origination of new forms of life. It involves the very opposite con-

clusion. If God creates, we must suppose it is as much a certainty, or, if you please, necessity, when the divine action reaches certain conditions of evolving life, that a new and higher species should be generated, as it is that any seed, in the most favorable conditions, should germinate. The result comes forth *naturally* from the continuous action of antecedent forces—the linked connection of cause and effect. If it is God who is evolving this creative progress, there can be no caprice. The infinite Intelligence and Wisdom, in any given case, can choose but one course—the best ; can do but one thing—the wisest. The idea of his taking either of several courses is ruled out. One, among all the possibilities in the Creator's view, must be the wisest and best. Infinite knowledge and integrity close the divine action to that course. With the Absolute Mind we must suppose that choice and purpose are one; that omniscience determines what the action shall be, and that while the creative force moves in infinite freedom, it as certainly moves in one fixed line to one predetermined result, in every case, as if impelled by an inexorable fate or necessity.

We derive the same conclusion from the *divine immutability*. God's volition can not be jerky and spasmodic. It can not originate and initiate new lines of force and being to-day that were not virtually in the energies at work yesterday. We conceive of the grand forces of nature as the expression of that volition. The unswerving uniformity of their action, which we name *law*, is at once

the manifestation and proof of the immutability of God. The laws of nature are uniform because the divine will, whose mode of action they are, is immutable. We claim no intimacy with the hidden methods of the Absolute. We do not pretend ability to trace the passage of the infinite energy forth into specific act. But surely it can not be exceeding the warrant of reason to assume that the forces which go forth under an Infinite purpose will be steady and reliable in their action.

In saying this, we have not forgotten Neibuhr's pithy *mot*, "I have no use for the God of the metaphysicians." Our thought is in danger of getting lost in the fathomless abyss. We do not want a Deity who is frozen or paralyzed by his own infiniteness. He must be capable of specific acts, and of all the infinite variety we see in nature. Out of the Infinite comes forth the finite. But what we would have especially considered here is, that we are under the necessity of shaping our ideas of what is in the Infinite from what we see in the finite, including, of course, the phenomena of our own consciousness, as well as those of the outer world. We admit the inadequacy of those ideas; the finite can not comprehend the Infinite; yet we can not refuse a place to the conceptions that force themselves upon the thinking mind as necessarily involved in the infinity of God. Though inadequate, they need not therefore be erroneous. We shall find the glory of the Creator, as manifested in his works, rising in sublimity, just in proportion as the mind rises in the conception of

that comprehensive *unity* which binds together all specific acts and facts, in both their origin and their issue, under immutable law. We say there is *will* in the creative force, yet when this term is used of the Infinite, we are not to think of his action as a series of volitions—separate, “broken” acts—but rather as a force acting from center to circumference of the universe, and flowing on forever and ever in the continuity of one invariable stream of energy. It is *one* volition. There is not only unity in the power that acts, but unity in the action. All specific effects are comprehended in this unity.

Perhaps this abstract and somewhat difficult conception may become clearer by reference to another divine attribute, more familiar to the contemplation of the common mind—omniscience. We think of the divine Will as of the divine Intelligence. It would be an absurdity to conceive of the knowledge belonging to that intelligence as consisting of separate facts or items gathered into the infinite Mind at different times and by separate acts of cognition. Such an idea would imply limits of knowledge. There would not be omniscience. Such a being would not be God. Our finite thought doubtless falls short of grasping the subject in its fullness; it need not for this reason be false as far as it goes. The conclusions which it finds itself compelled by the laws of its own action to rest in, after the utmost stretch of its powers, have the warrant of the inevitable for their validity. And after such effort we find ourselves compelled to think of all particulars in

the divine knowledge, from the greatest fact to the least, from the world or the universe to the minutest atom, as included in the *one* act of intelligence which was, and is, and is to be forevermore; which sees all and each at once, and from eternity to eternity. So of the infinite volition.

We may, perhaps, find further helpful illustration in our ideas of time and space. We gain our conceptions of these from limited parts of them—from finite duration and extension. Yet the mind is compelled by the laws of its own action to think of both as infinite. It sees that they must be without limits. At least it can not conceive the contrary as true. All finite parts of duration, from the winking of an eye to the rise and fall of a kingdom, or the æons of a world's evolution, are included in the unity of infinite time. All limited parts of space, from that filled by a mote or "ultimate monad," to that filled by a world or measured by solar systems, are included in the unity of unlimited space. The infinite must *finite* itself, or come within metes and bounds, before its manifestation can come within our finite comprehension. It does not therefore follow that there is no infinite. God must *finite* himself in particular acts in order to manifest himself to finite beings. And so far as we can be sure that we are looking upon reality, and have made no mistake in our apprehension of his Word or his works, we have a right to the conviction that we see him as he is through these manifestations. He can not mask himself in the finite with the design to deceive. On the other hand, we have

a right to take it for granted that our interpretation of either his Word or his works has gone wrong whenever it involves a conception that necessarily contradicts the immutability or infinity of his being.

When we claim, therefore, that a personal God is the primal force in the creative evolution going on around us, and of which we are a part, we do not imply that it must go forward by broken, separate, unconnected acts in the origination of new forms, either of matter or of life; we rather say that such acts in the case are impossible. Creation goes on in the inexorable uniformity of law *because* it is God who creates. The never varying uniformity of nature's grand forces is the direct sublime expression of his immutability—the warrant and invitation for the highest trust of his intelligent creatures.

Once having reached this position, it becomes readily apparent that the real question at issue between science and religion is, not whether God creates by evolution and according to fixed law, or in some other manner—the real issue is *whether it is God who creates*; and that at last inevitably resolves itself into the question *whether there is any God to create*. It is only when science takes the negative on this question, either openly or by implication, that religion has anything to dread from its activity and influence.

Religion claims, and must claim, that there is a God, and that he creates. Her reverence, her worship, her very existence, have no basis save in the evidence for that fact.

They would vanish from the world with the general failure of that conviction. Heaven would be vacant ; earth would be a sepulchre ; man would be the saddest of orphans.

Religion must insist, also, on attributes in her God that answer to the personality of man. She can not worship a *law of nature*. She can not hold mutual communion with an unconscious force. She can not very warmly love "a stream of tendency." If she attenuate her conception of God into Matthew Arnold's "Power above ourselves that makes for righteousness," she will be in great danger of falling asleep in her devotions. Such phrases, designating the divine Personality, may well enough be allowed to such minds as Arnold's, at once philosophic and devoutly earnest, and struggling to meet the difficulties of other perplexed minds, or to rid the popular ideas concerning God of crude absurdities ; but they are fatally abused when they are permitted to eliminate from our conception and sense of the Divine the vivid faith and feeling that there is some reality in the ONE whom we trust and adore, that answers perfectly to the trust and want of man, thought to thought, heart to heart, love to love.

None of us are unaware of the difficulties that gather around the conception of a personal God. Doubtless we have all shared, more or less, in the struggles which have led some of the acutest minds of this age, both among scientists and churchmen, to declare God the *Unknowable*

They strain the eye along the visible lines of finite manifestation toward the Infinite, and say it seems to us as though there must be some reality there—nay, kindly permit us to believe there is ; but they affirm, nevertheless, that whatever it may be, it is forever unapproachable to our thought ; it is lost to us in the limitless depths. We can, in reason, neither affirm nor deny anything positive of that existence in which we believe—if we believe.

Against these powerful negations I must insist that religion can vindicate her claim that God is the most clearly and intensely *knowable* fact in the universe ; that she can establish this claim on a firm, rational, and scientific basis. Faith in the existence of a personal God is nearly universal among the races of mankind. Save in quite explainable exceptions, it rises to a clearer conviction as culture exalts the powers of the mind. There must be reasons for this fact. I must insist that those reasons can be clearly seen and intelligibly stated. The candid mind will find them valid for this faith. A personal God is knowable through the phenomena of his manifestation in nature and in the soul of man, just as certainly as any supersensible fact, gravitation, for example, or electricity, or the intelligent mind of the friend with whom you converse face to face, is knowable through the phenomena of *its* manifestation. Not *all* that he is (for that would imply infinite capacity in us), yet *that* he is, and as far as his manifestation of himself to us goes, in the essential attributes of his being, *what* he is, find as firm a basis of

conviction in the conscious cognizance of the human mind as any fundamental principle of physical science. The evidence in the case will be embarrassed, if at all, by its simplicity. As with all primal truths, the difficulty is not that the proof is too far, but that it is too near. Few of us ever doubt the reality of existences, both material and spiritual, outside of ourselves. If another, however, sees fit to demand of you the proof, you may find it far from easy to demonstrate that which it is impossible for you to doubt. Yet, unless you have encountered one of those perversely original minds that doggedly persist in denying "first truths," you may shape an argument that will carry conviction.

I shall not rely, in this case, upon the argument from final causes. This is as old as Socrates, and was never more tersely or clearly stated than in his saying, "No work of skill makes itself."* In the hands of Paley, it greatly stimulated inquiry, and seemed to give a powerful check to the popular religious skepticism of a century ago. It has a value no doubt. I would not throw it aside. But standing alone, it must be confessed inadequate.

Nor shall I dwell on the more modern argument, urged by some vigorous thinkers, that *intuition* tells us that all force must originate in and emanate from *Will*. Inert matter, they say, can not start new lines of activity. We are compelled to think of all forces which are not absolutely eternal as springing from some voluntary agent.

* Uberweg's History of Philosophy, Vol. I, p. 280.

I confess that my own mind can not resist this conclusion. And I think that with many who are accustomed to analyze their own mental activities closely, it is an argument that will carry great weight.* But in seeking a

* The following remarks on the point here suggested were made during the discussion which followed the reading of this essay, by Professor Joseph Le Conte, of the University of California, and made so much impression at the time that I have felt that I would be doing the public a service in procuring them for print:

"I think a little reflection will convince that the idea of causation or force is not derived from *without* by *observation*, but wholly from *within* through *consciousness*. The idea of external forces is a projection of conscious internal states into external nature. We can not conceive of effects without causative force, because we are intensely conscious of being ourselves, through our wills, an active cause of external phenomena. If we were merely passive intelligent *observers*, and not causers, of changes in the external world, these phenomena would seem to us only to shift, and change, and succeed each other, without cause. We might note the order and determine the laws of sequence, but would never imagine any causal nexus between them. In the minds of such passive *observers*, but not *doers*, would be completely realized the only consistent material philosophy—a philosophy in which, like Comte's, cause and force have no place. But the certainty of a causative force *within*—the certainty that *we*, through our *wills*, and by the conscious exertion of a force, do determine effects in the external world, compels the mind to attribute all effects to causative forces having their origin in *will*; and therefore when the effects are not caused by ourselves, we necessarily attribute them to *forces external* to ourselves. At first—that is, in primitive races and in early childhood—the external forces take the form of a *personal will like our own*, resident in each object, and determining its phenomena—Fetichism. Afterwards, we gradually learn to recognize the wide difference between the conscious internal and external forces. Then we naturally conceive of phenomena as caused by unconscious resident forces, under the control of several (Polytheism), or of one (Monotheism) personal will. Thus a human philosophy of nature necessarily consists of two antithetic elements, or is a product of two factors; the one derived from *without*, the other contributed from *within*; the one objective, the other subjective. In the language of philosophy, these two are phenomena and cause; in the language of science, matter and force. In the language of psychology, they are matter and spirit; in the language of religion, nature and God. The pure idealist would empty existence of the former, the pure materialist of the latter; but a rational philosophy requires both. Again, uncultured man *projects* his own personal conscious will into every object of nature; the modern materialist, on the contrary, *injects* external material forces into this realm of consciousness; but a rational philosophy requires the complete distinction of these two."

less abstract evidence, I have traced out a line of proof which I believe to be not less conclusive, and one that will carry conviction to a greater number of minds.

Let us start from that universal intuition which lies at the basis of all valid reasoning; namely, that cause and effect must answer reciprocally to each other. There must be something in every cause adequate to account for every effect it produces. To question this principle is to suspend all reasoning until it shall be put beyond doubt. In the unmeasured *Cause*, therefore, from which (if we may not yet say from whom) this vast series of effects, which we call creation or the universe, springs, must dwell the adequate explanation of every fact and phenomenon included in the whole. Among these facts and phenomena we are conscious of thought, affection, will—in short, of spiritual personality. These are the highest effects in kind of all that come within our cognizance. What follows? Must there not be in the original Cause that which answers to these grandest effects—thought, affection, will, spiritual *personality*? The human mind can not rationally resist this demonstration.

It may be objected that this makes our faith in a personal God rest on an inference. What matters? The inference is but one step from the intuition of the principle which binds together cause and effect. The step is as inevitable as any corollary from a theorem in geometry. Deny its validity, and all reasoning becomes but dreaming, and every grandest structure it builds, but “the baseless fabric of a vision.”

It seems to me that this short, easy, and certain step of reasoning from a universal intuition, accounts for the universal belief in a God among the races of mankind. Few may be able to analyze their own mental consciousness back to the sources of this conviction; but when it is done, here will be found its germ. And however the evidence may become obscured and the reason confused for a time, the force of this ever-present principle is sure to draw the human mind back again into this faith. Theodore Parker insisted that the being of God is an intuition or direct consciousness of the soul. Emerson is reported to have asked him, "But what are we poor mortals to do who have not this intuition or direct consciousness?"—confessing that it was not clear to him. Multitudes share in the doubt of Emerson, but a valid demonstration may carry weight when the consciousness of God is not clear. If, upon reflection, they find that in denying a personal Creator they would be virtually contradicting one of their most familiar intuitions, they may accept from reason a faith which they were not prepared to accept from any conscious experience or reading of interior phenomena.

If it be objected, again, that the inference from our personal attributes, as creatures, is good only for the *personality*, and not for the *infinitude*, of the Creator—not therefore for a God—it suffices to answer, that, a personal Creator granted, the human mind will never find itself able to stop short of clothing him with the attribute of infinity. The leap of thought from the finite to the

infinite is just as inevitable in the sphere of mental, moral, and spiritual existence as in the conception of time and space.

But the claim is urged that there may be in matter alone some hidden quality or force sufficient, if we could but trace its evolution, to account for all the higher phenomena of our personal being, thought, moral sentiment, and volition. This is a *may-be*; no science has yet been able to take one plausible step toward transmuting it into a *must-be* or *is*. To the mass of mankind it is a supposition that seems to contradict some of the primal facts of their consciousness. But let us admit, for the moment, that there is in matter some inherent power which evolves at last into all the mental and spiritual phenomena of human consciousness; we would then ask how far this evolution may go? Who can say that its highest product is revealed in the consciousness with which we are familiar? If this power be inherent in matter, and if matter be self-existent, as we must in that case suppose, it has already had an eternity in which to evolve its possibilities. Countless ages ago it must have done its best. Who could say that it had not developed a personal consciousness as universal as matter itself? Who could say that this wonderful restless power in matter had not already brought the entire physical universe into an exquisite organism, at its summit a brain and sensorium, at its center a heart, and throughout its infinite members, nerves of action and feeling, vibrating with unimaginable sensitiveness to the

melody or the discord of the spheres—in short, an infinite Personality,

“Whose body nature is, and God the soul.”

And why may not a central will find this universal body of matter at least as pliant to its purposes as the human body is to its controlling will? So the physicist, who finds the genesis of all life and intelligence in material atoms, can not be sure, after all, that he has eliminated God from the universe.

This is but an *argumentum ad hominem*. It is doubtless fanciful to the verge of trifling; yet not one whit more so, it seems to me, than the philosophy which sees in all effects nothing higher than a material cause. The highest intuitions of the human reason, awakened and growing clearer by all the facts that feed the growth of intellect, rest in a God whose qualities and attributes must answer to the highest conscious facts of man's own personality, and thus give religion the firmest ground and justification for her worship, trust, and personal love. Intellect and heart, reason and faith, science and religion, unite their testimony, and bending the knee in reverent worship together, blend their voices in sublime ascription of honor, and wisdom, and power, and might, to HIM—Creator and Father—who “stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.”

I must here enter my protest against that mistaken admission (becoming common, I am sorry to see, among

theologians), that the faculties of the mind that occupy themselves with the matters of secular science can not grasp the truths of religion ; that the latter belong to a realm of moral feeling and insight too lofty for the telescope of intellect to scan ; that their firmest evidence is given only in an experience which presupposes faith. This looks very much like pleading the baby act. It has an air of wishing to raise a prejudice in favor of our own side before the debate begins.

Let us not lose sight of the distinction between sentiment and science. Sentiment feels ; science sees and defines. The feeling of sentiment is variable ; it comes and goes. The definition of science, once made clear to the mental eye, is steady and permanent. Feeling is often the phantom-born illusion of our own imagination. Science is sure of the *reality* of what it sees. But a sentiment is sometimes observed to be universal, or nearly so. This fact forbids the idea of its being mere illusion. It is hardly reason to suppose that men of all races, in every variety of circumstances, and through all ages of time, are deceived by the same phantom. In this case, feeling is undoubtedly reliable evidence of some substantial reality as its cause. And what we claim here is this—such cause will never fail to come forth in some forms of manifestation that will render it capable of more or less distinct *intellectual* apprehension and definition. Real causes can be discriminated from illusion. Yet feeling alone can never make this discrimination, nor bring its cause into

the domain of science. It must summon the aid of intellect to see and define its reality. A person takes into his hands the opposite poles of an electric battery; he *feels* electricity. If every one who does the same has the same sensations, he becomes sure there must be some external reality which awakens this feeling. Yet feeling tells him little or nothing of the nature of that force. Intellect must take it in hand, construct apparatus, experiment on the conditions under which it appears, mark its flash, and measure the power of its stroke, and write out the laws of its action. Then he has not a mere sensation, but a *science* of electricity. One who has never felt the sensation may, by diligent observation and study, become master of the science. He may come to know much more of this force *scientifically*, through its other manifestations, than the one whose nerves have been shaken by it even in intensest degree.

Now, the sentiment of religion is nearly universal. We have a right to conclude from this fact that it has its source in some substantial objective reality. But this sentiment alone can not give us a *science* of religious truths. In this case, again, I claim that there are manifestations of all realities underlying the essential doctrines of religion, aside from any feeling or experience coming only through faith, which place them within the grasp of the scientific intellect. I must insist that the purely intellectual basis of religion is as reliable as that of any natural science, and that it presents to the scientific eye

for study and definition, a body of fact and law equally sharp and clear in outline. Shall we turn from this firm ground, and give out that if our opponents only *would* follow us into the realm of feeling or religious experience, and consent to bring other faculties into play, we could overwhelm them with evidence? Shall we thus abandon the fair, open field of battle, and retire behind our breast-works? This would be a half confession of defeat. It confounds the distinction between sentiment and science, and surrounds the whole discussion with nebulous vagueness.

Undoubtedly, the experience of religion, the feeling of her grand truths that comes only through faith, is essential to the realization of her practical benefits. Electricity will not heal our infirmities unless we have faith to take it *feelingly* into the system. But this is no reason for telling the skeptic that there is no sufficient proof for the reality of religious truths until he has the experience of faith. One need not doubt that there is such a force as electricity until he has been struck by lightning.

If we are to have a sacred science or theology, it must abide by the methods and submit to the tests by which all other science stands or falls. We must not ask for it "poetic license," or the indulgence ever accorded to sentiment. On the field of reform, and in all practical application of religious truths for the improvement of character and life, we may use the weapons of sentiment. On the field of science, we must keep to the weapons of science.

A word further respecting the bearing of this discussion on the questions of miracles and prayer. It seems to me that a far clearer light would rest upon these questions, if we should come to them with some proper conception of the fact that the action of the infinite Personality must be manifested to us through finite agents or media. Let us call this the doctrine of *mediate manifestation*. If this one principle had been duly considered, it would have saved an immense amount of heated and well-nigh meaningless controversy. The disputants have started from a premise of fiction and impossibility. There has been a vague, half-conscious assumption that the manifestation of the Infinite to us can be infinite. This, of course, is an absurdity. It would imply infinite powers in us to receive the manifestation. By our limitations, God must come into terms of the finite in order to reveal himself to us, or in any way touch our life. We can not grasp the entirety of his being. "We know in part." Phenomena suggest ; intuition catches the suggestion and interprets the power revealed. We can not conceive that the Infinite should come forth in self-manifestation save in and through some finite medium.

It will be readily seen how this principle applies to miracles. The immediate agent need not be conceived as the Infinite Power. It may be of the least possible consequence to the science of religion, or, indeed, to its practical obligations, whether we can or can not establish historically the intervention of God with the forces of nature in

this or that particular event. The proofs of his being and care and sovereign rule are so infinitely grander in nature and in the soul of man, that they dwarf into insignificance any possible evidence from the exceptional display of the divine power in miracles. The longer I reflect, the stronger becomes the conviction in me that the ultimate conclusion of Christian thought will be, that the direct and specific action of the divine will and power is not, and never has been, manifested in any phenomena that implies supernatural interference, or the intrusion of a superhuman purpose into the order of nature. Such phenomena will be referred at once to finite purpose and agency. And as the Scriptures suggest the possibility of evil miracles, the character of the agent will be estimated by the quality and apparent aim of the act, just as we estimate the character of visible actors. God will be seen acting directly only in the unvarying movements of nature and spirit that transcend immeasurably the possibilities of all finite powers. But when secular science assumes to pronounce a miracle either impossible or incredible, because the forces of nature act with inflexible uniformity, we must ask its proofs. Admit that the uniformity of physical laws is as relentless as fate; say that they are the expression of infinite immutability, and that God would shake our confidence in that attribute if any of the primal forces of nature should be observed to waver, as by arbitrary diversion, one hairbreadth from the lines of action predetermined under the sequence of cause and effect—is

a miracle *therefore* impossible or incredible? To prove this, you must not only show that God will not or can not work a miracle, but also that there is no created finite intelligence serving his will in the universe that can and will. Has science done this? Has she swept the whole realm of spiritual existence with her telescope, and demonstrated that there is no agent within all its bounds competent for the supposed effect? To deny any intelligent existence separate from the body, is, of course, to cut the knot; but to admit such existence, and then deny the possibility of a miracle, seems to be not only unscientific, but irrational. The boy snaps a pebble into the air. Nature's forces, in their immutable uniformity, would not, could not, have done this in the particular case. Is the order of nature violated, her uniformity broken, by this act? No; a free personal will or agent takes hold of her forces, and uses them for his purpose. Is reason shocked at the supposition of such agents in a higher world, or of their power to produce in this effects that bear the stamp of the miraculous?

If it be said that a miracle wrought through a subordinate finite agent could be no proof of the existence or care of God, I would refer the objector to the old maxim, "*Qui facit per alium, facit per se*," (whoever acts through his agent, acts himself.) We shall easily conclude that every good thing done in this world "cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is *no variableness nor shadow of turning*." I care not to

insist that a miracle has actually been wrought either here or there. I would strenuously deny that the evidences or interests of religion are vitally involved in our ability to prove any such fact. The main question, whether God actually upholds and rules this world in the interest of truth and righteousness, must be appealed, in any case, to a higher court. Yet when the denial of miracles is set up in the name of natural law, it seems worth while to insist, in the interest of accurate thinking, that science shall be scientific.

What has been said of miracles applies, with equal pertinency, to prayer. The Scriptures uniformly and consistently teach that God answers prayer through the ministration of finite spiritual agents. This takes away all need of the inference that the infinite Will must turn aside from his fixed and immutable course to bring answer. You breathe the wish for water to quench your thirst. Your child, hearing you, runs to bring the brimming goblet. Your prayer is answered. The order of nature has received no shock. Is reason revolted at the suggestion of spiritual agents, *able* and *ready* to run to the aid of your want? Deny the suggested fact, and you tread close upon the denial of a spiritual immortality. Admit the fact, and neither the demonstrations of science nor the deductions of reason will support the inference that it is vain to expect answers to prayer. As miracles are *possible* through the mediate manifestations of divine power, so answers to prayer through *mediatorial ministration*.

I do not believe that the fixed order of nature will ever be disturbed, in the slightest degree, to answer prayer ; yet I make no doubt either of its benefits or of its answers from objective sources. Prayer is the rational means to certain desirable ends, as much as plowing and sowing. "Sow, and ye shall reap;" "Ask, and ye shall receive." These are kindred promises, though belonging to different spheres. Work takes hold of material forces ; prayer takes hold of spiritual forces. Labor for material blessings ; pray for spiritual ; recognize the goodness of God in both—this is the will of God, as read in the order of nature. This will be the law of a scientifically instructed piety, which holds that will in deepest reverence. Begging heaven for material gifts that can come only through exceptional means becomes revolting to noble minds, for deeper reasons than the impossibility of answers through the agency moved by the prayer ; but the *immediate* contact of the Infinite with the finite mind is a scientific truth, if there is a God, and I can not believe that the noblest will ever cease to need and profit by that highest form of prayer, the devout contemplation which opens the yearning capacities of the human soul to the conscious incoming and indwelling of the *Infinite Life and Love*.

To sum up this discussion, then, the real issue between sacred science and secular science is, not whether God created in this or that particular time or manner, nor whether his care intervened miraculously for human needs in this or that particular event, nor whether he inspired a

few men to infallible utterances ; but the issue is, whether God created, cared for, or inspired at all ; and that is equivalent to the issue whether there is or is not a God.

Physical Man the Final Term of Material Evolution.

A lecture delivered in the Independent Church, Oakland, Sunday evening, February 24th, 1878.

Eight or nine years ago, after considerable reading and study upon the facts in the case, I felt myself driven to accept the doctrine of evolution. Not satisfied that the explanation proposed by Darwin and others had grasped all the forces that have been active in producing the vastly varied phenomena of life on our globe, I nevertheless found it impossible to doubt longer that the word *evolution* fitly expresses the law under which those forces have acted—that species are genetically derived, not separately created. The facts amount to scientific demonstration. But it seems desirable to state here one feature of the law of evolution, which, if not observed, leaves the way open to many absurd misunderstandings. The popular idea is that evolution implies continuous and invariable progress; that its course is ever forward and upward; that every new species springing from any well-developed form of life is higher than the parent form. This is by no means the case. The new species is differentiated (to use the current word of science) from its progenitor, but is not

always higher. Sometimes there is retrogression instead of progression. The new form is lower than that from which it sprung. Sometimes it is difficult to say whether it is lower or higher ; we are only sure that it is *different*. In some instances, from one original stock have sprung several branches, some higher, others lower than the original ; each differing from all the others as greatly as, or even more than, it differs from the common parent. Each proves to be a new species which perpetuates its kind. The general law here indicated is thus formulated by Professor Joseph LeConte : "The first introduced of any class or order were not typical representatives of that class or order, but connecting links with other classes or orders ; the complete separation of the two or more classes or orders represented being the result of subsequent evolution."* Thus that strange flying creature called the Archæopteryx, with the long, pointed tail of the reptile, edged with flat, radiating feathers, like the tail of a bird, with feathered arms or fore-legs like wings, yet terminating in claws, like the fore-legs of the reptile, seems to have been one of these connecting or comprehensive types. In one direction possibly sprung some reptilian form, a lower or degenerate offspring of the flying parent ; in the other, almost certainly rose the perfect bird, nobler than its progenitor,

"To sweep the heavens on easy wing."

So, again, the mud-fishes (*dipneusta*), that make a nest

* "Elements of Geology," p. 332. See, also, Spencer's "Sociology," Vol. I, p. 106.

of leaves for themselves in the dry mud during summer, and breathe through lungs, then in the winter take to the water of marshes and rivers, and breathe through gills like fishes, are thought to have branched one way into a low form of exclusively gill-breathing water animal, and another way into an exclusively lung-breathing amphibian. The ascidian and amphioxus are also notable transitional forms. The whole course of evolution, indeed, is marked by examples of such generalized or connecting types. They seem not to have been very numerous comparatively, nor, as a rule, to have lasted very long. They come forth in the economy of nature, enrich the earth with new varieties of life, and then disappear, or survive in only a few obscure representatives. Hence, evolution does not affirm, as is popularly supposed, that man is descended directly from the highest of the simian tribes, the gorilla, chimpanzee, orang, or gibbon, but would rather suggest some higher intermediate form, of which the ape is a degenerate, and man an improved branch. That no remains of this intermediate being have been found, weighs little against this suggestion. According to the general law, we should expect them to be but few; and too small a section of the earth has been thoroughly explored to justify the conclusion that they never will be discovered. To a wider search, the continents may any day yield up the proofs that vindicate the regularity and uniformity of the methods of nature.

But here man is. Some power or process has placed

this supreme fact of creation before us for our study, to make out of him what we can. That in physical structure he is closely allied to the animal races, no one will dispute. It is plain, also, that he stands at the head of the animal kingdom. Physically, he is the most complex and highly organized being we know. Nature, at one with sacred scripture, crowns him king, and gives him dominion over the fish of the sea, the fowls of the air, and over every living thing that creepeth on the earth. He comes forth as the last-born species in the sub-kingdom of vertebrates. Then, as we trace a genetic relationship through the various grades of life, from man down to the lowest, the question rises spontaneously in the mind, is he the last and highest to be expected? Is he the *final term* of nature's physical progress? Does the upward course of the material forces of evolution end in him? Or may we expect them to *differentiate* still further, and produce some higher species, that will stand in a relation to him like that which he holds to the species next below himself? This question possesses more than a scientific interest. Its bearing on the moral and religious view of man and his destiny makes a conclusive answer, if one may be given, peculiarly desirable.

When I first came to the conclusion that the evidences of evolution must compel the assent of thinking men, sooner or later, this question at once confronted me. Along with it came the thought that in the brain (the size and quality of which peculiarly characterize the human spe-

cies), and in its functions and its relations to the whole body, ought, if anywhere, to be found the answer. In a conversation on the subject with the late Dr. Durant, President of our University, he suggested that even the *position* of the human body, perfectly erect as it should be, might furnish, when compared with the position of the lower animals, a hint of completeness. Professor Joseph LeConte also informed me that Agassiz had noticed the fact of the gradual turning of the face from the back of the head in the lowest vertebrates, over to the front in the highest. Acting upon these hints, I began to observe animal forms more closely. If I have not been a misinterpreter of the facts, there is to be found in the very steps of evolutionary progress leading up *to* man, viewed in connection with his physical form and structure, full evidence that physical evolution has reached its goal *in* man ; that in a typical human body, perfect of its kind, the Creator's ideal would be realized. Various lines of advance, running through the whole course of organic evolution, all seem to center and end in the form of man. Let us inquire if they do not justify the conclusion that the forces of evolution have done their best in him.

I. A presumption to this effect, of more or less force, may be drawn from the fact that there has been no radical change of type since man first appeared. We know with reasonable certainty what the primitive man was, physically, from his remains that have been exhumed in various parts of the earth. The "Man of Mentone,"

whose skeleton was found in an Italian cave, in connection with the bones of the cave bear, hyena, and lion, contemporaneous with the mammoth, and other species of animals long since extinct, must have been physically a fine specimen of the *genus homo*. He was tall and well-proportioned. His brain was as large as the average human brain of the present day. Yet his life ran its course far back in the Paleolithic era, probably tens of thousands of years before history had begun to take note of human deeds.

True, this evidence from time is only presumptive. No one claims that it furnishes demonstration. It may be urged against its conclusiveness that many lower forms of life held possession of the earth a much longer time than we claim for man, without showing any advance of grade. The rhizopod and other low forms of marine fauna may have passed hundreds of thousands of years without witnessing any radical advance of type. But, on the other hand, it must be remembered that, as the forms of life become more highly organized, more complex and active, the rate of evolution is accelerated. This seems to be a general law. Man, therefore, as the most highly organized animal, ought to require only a comparatively brief time to outgrow himself in the way of evolution, if he is ever to do so at all. We hence conclude that if a creature higher than man in physical type is ever to appear, he is rather tardy in his coming.

II. Turning to more positive evidence, let us see what

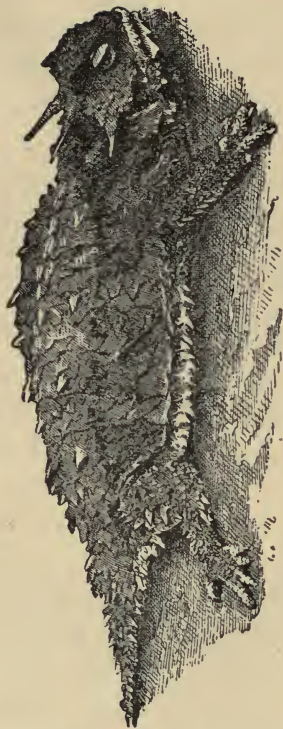


Fig. 1. HORNED-TOAD.

suggestions may be found in the comparative position of the body. Begin with the lowest of the *Vertebrates*, the sub-kingdom to which man belongs. Take the fish or the serpent, and the lowest reptiles. The position which nature gives them is horizontal, and, if their life is on land, prone in the dust. Their vertebral column maintains along its whole length nearly a level with the horizon. The beginning could not be more groveling. But as you come to a little higher species, as, for example, the sala-

mander* and the horned-toad of California, the body begins to be lifted up out of the dust on legs, and the head rises slightly above the line of the vertebral column. The cervical vertebræ bend upward. In our domestic animals every one can observe large progress in the same direction. In the horse, especially, the legs, instead of projecting and sprawling out from the sides, as in the highest of

* See illustrations under the word in Webster's and Worcester's Dictionaries.

the reptiles, are firmly under the body, lifting the animal clear away from the ground, and the arching neck carries the head almost up to the angle of forty-five degrees, the half-way line between the horizontal and the perpendicular. In the lowest of the simian tribes, still further advance is indicated by a position above this line. The bodies of the higher species are almost erect. In the typical man perfection is reached. He stands erect, his feet pointing to the center of the earth, his head to the zenith—the attitude of noblest majesty.

This upright position is also the one in which least physical strength is expended in supporting the body, either standing still, in locomotion, or at active work. Here, manifestly, the limit of this line of progress is reached. Beginning in the horizontal, evolution ends in the perpendicular. It can go no further in that direction without leaning backward, and descending toward the groveling position from which it started. May we not hence infer that in the matter of position, evolution has done its best in man?

III. Several examples may be drawn from morphology, or the study of the external forms of animals, that clearly look toward the same conclusion. The most obvious, perhaps, is the one already mentioned as suggested by Agassiz. The *face*, in the lower species of vertebrates with which we are familiar (fishes and ophidian reptiles), in its relative position to the vertebral column, as compared with man, is on the back of the head. As the forms

of life begin to rise in grade, the face begins to turn over toward the front, making an increasing angle with the line of the back-bone. Observe, again, the salamander and horned toad already named. In the hog, the lowest of our domesticated animals, a considerable advance is indicated by the increase of this angle. In our greater domestic favorites, this progress has gone so far as to carry the line of the face well over toward a right angle with the vertebral column. In the gibbon and orang of Asia, among the highest of the anthropoid apes, several degrees of further advance are seen ; the change is almost complete. In man, at last, the face comes to the front. It has changed sides on the head, having made a revolution of nearly one hundred and eighty degrees. Here it is obvious, again, that we have come to the end of this line of evolution. For physical reasons it can not well go farther. We can not conceive that if this change should turn the face still farther around its features would be improved in position, more beautiful, or better subserve their proper functions.

Look, again, at the position of the eye. In the fish it is on the side of the head. The axis of vision, piercing the center of each eye, and running through the head, would make nearly a straight line, like the axle running through the hubs of a pair of wheels. Sight is monocular. The object seen by one eye is concealed from the other, because the animal's own head is in its light. But as the species rise in grade, the eye

moves round to the front of the head, just as we have seen the face turning over to the front. At about the medium line, vision becomes dimly binocular. From this point it grows clearer at every step of progress. In the anthropoid apes, the limit of advance is almost touched. In man, the axes of vision become exactly parallel, and sight is perfectly stereoscopic. Evolution can go no farther on that line of improvement without a result which is regarded as neither a beauty nor an advantage. No one wishes to have the axes of vision *cross* each other.

I can see no marked significance in what is called the "facial angle," beyond what has already been observed in the relation of the face to the line of the vertebral column. Comparative anatomists admit that this angle is affected by so many local variations of form, of no special significance, that it can not be relied on as establishing any characteristic distinctions of species. But what may, for convenience sake, be called the *axis of the profile*, seems to me to afford the base-line of a measurement that is far more suggestive. Every one must notice that in the lowest vertebrates there is properly no *nose* at all, and the muzzle, when the upper and lower jaws are closed together, is wedge-shaped. The jaws of a fish make a blunt wedge. The lower land vertebrates, reptiles and saurians, approximate the fish in this respect, but in them *nostrils* appear. These begin to thicken the point of the wedge. A broad, flat muzzle results. The nostrils turn upward and outward. Nature has blocked out a nose. As the grade of

life rises, the nose contracts in width, and increases relatively in length and prominence. The nostrils gradually turn inward and downward. Every naturalist will recall at once in this connection the fact that the monkeys grouped as *platyrrhine*, from the comparative breadth of the nose, are much lower in type than the *catarrhine*, or narrow-nosed species. Observe that the nose proper is to be carefully distinguished from the upper jaw on which it is situated, and from any prehensile appendage, like the trunk of the elephant, and the similar instrument on the snout of the ant-eater; then it will be obvious that in the human species the nose is at once narrower and more prominent, relatively, than is seen in any animal form. •The tubes of the nostrils have become parallel, and open directly downward. Here we come to another limit.

Now, if we turn to the under side of the wedge, the lower jaw, as we found at first no nose on the upper, so here we find no chin. It may be a fancy, but observation of race and individual characteristics, suggests the query, whether the development of this organ or feature may not express the evolution of will power, and perhaps of affection, which, in man, give what we call force of character and personal magnetism—in excess, degenerating into selfish ambition, willfulness, conceit, or avarice. At any rate, the lower face, or chin, and the upper face, or forehead, seem equally to mark the stage arrived at in evolution. Chin and brain advance *pari passu*. The mid-face becomes relatively less prominent. Run along

up the scale which we have instanced so often, from the fish-wedge to the human face, and this will be apparent. There is a constant receding of the muzzle proper, or upper and lower jaws, and an increasing prominence of the forehead and chin, until, in the human countenance, the upper, middle, and lower face are on a straight line. In the classic Greek face, accepted as the ideal of the human features, draw a line from the center of the forehead, or extreme front of the brain, to the end of the chin,



Fig. 2. HERCULES AND OMPHALE.

and it just touches the root of the upper lip below the nose. This is what I have denominated the axis of the profile. The average face of civilized peoples will stand the test of this line, or nearly so. If we apply it in savage tribes, or even to half-civilized races, it will suggest the question whether they have attained a complete development physically, any more than they have mentally and morally. Observe any group of Chinese you may happen to fall in with. Compare them in this respect with the



Fig. 3. AH SIN.*

(Photograph by Wm. B. Ingersoll, Esq.)

representatives of other nationalities with whom they here mingle. In no case will you fail to observe a most striking difference. In the average Mongolian face, the middle portion, or muzzle, falls more than half an inch forward of the axial line suggested. In the average negro face of pure blood, this characteristic is still more marked, the prognathous muzzle often projecting an inch and a half, and sometimes full two inches in front of the axial line. Whether we regard their physical development as complete or arrested, there can hardly be a doubt that if the intellects of these savage and semi-civilized races could be roused by the studies that make the glory of the cultivated mind, and their consciences quickened with the sense of a higher morality, and their wills energized by the enterprise of civilization, their features would soon begin to confess the influence in a very visible change of form. The animal prominence of jaw would recede, forehead and chin would advance, and in a very few generations the upper, middle, and lower face would be found in

* The artist was directed to take the photograph of the first live Chinaman he could catch. This is the result. The prominence of the mid-face is quite within, rather than beyond, the average.

line. Take the infant of prognathous savages into a civilized home, and give it the best culture of education, and the result will be expressed in a greatly modified form of features. On the other hand, among civilized and highly cultivated people, you will meet instances, not very rare, of persons in whom the forehead and chin are relatively

so prominent that the mid-face falls considerably in the rear of the axial line. The profile is actually concave or *dishing*. I have never discovered one example of this



Fig. 4. MARQUESAN.



Fig. 5. MAORI WOMAN.

kind among Chinese, Indians, or Negroes. In such instances there may be superior powers of intellect in some directions, and a certain moral intensity, but some want of balance is likely also to be observed; the equilibrium of nature is not maintained. The character will commonly be

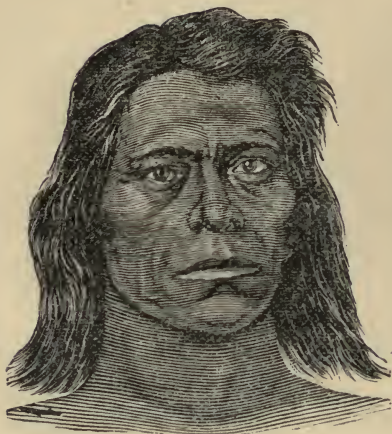


Fig. 6. PINO, Chief of the Utes, Colorado.*

marred by eccentricity, or some form of amiable weakness. Evolution has gone beyond its due bounds. But we never see a very prominent normal forehead matched with a weak, receding chin.

It is worthy of remark in passing, that, in all savage tribes, you will see the broad, flat nose, with the nostrils apparently struggling to turn outward and upward. The depressed point and unshaped outline stop at the child stage of development. The bulbous nostrils, with round openings like large gimlet holes (the nose of the young child simply enlarged), spreading the base, as if growth in length had met some obstacle that compelled it to find room in width, just hint the peculiar form and expression of the reptile face. In the semi-civilized races, you will always see this feature modifying in the direction of the higher type. Taking all these facts connected with the morphology of the human features, I think they give support to the conclusion that

* The typical Indian face is often represented with a long, sharp nose, and projecting chin—such a face as is never actually seen among our aborigines.

Figures 4, 5, and 6 are from photographs obtained among the natives, by C. D. Voy, Esq., of Oakland.



Fig. 7. HOTTENTOT WOMAN.



Fig. 8. FEMALE GORILLA.*

(From *Winchell's Pre-adamites*.)

in the typical face of the civilized man, nature shows the final result of physical evolution.

Other examples might be drawn from the shape and structure of the eye, the ear, the mouth or lips, and perhaps from every other feature. I doubt not, also, that a more minute acquaintance with comparative anatomy and physiology than I can pretend to, viewed with this reference, would reveal the same truth in the relative proportions of the arms and limbs, the structure and functions of the heart and lungs, the size and arrangement of the muscles—in short, in almost every part and member of the vital organism. The illustrations given

* I cannot resist the suspicion that the look of this beast's face is more human than in the original; but the profile and form of the features are, no doubt, correctly represented, and clearly fall in with the line of thought I aim to illustrate.

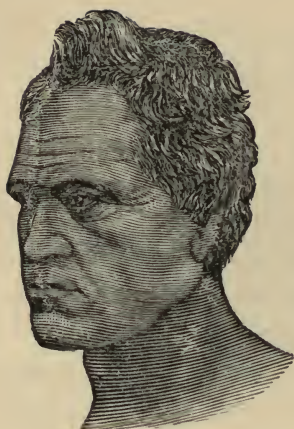


Fig. 9. TAMITI WAKA NENE,
Maori Chief.*

but just open a glimpse into a field upon which rich fruits may hereafter be gathered.

But I will tax your patience at this time with but one illustration further. It is drawn from the evolution of the nervous system, or what has come to be known among scientists as *cephalization*. It is nature's process of brain building. The example may be called at once structural and psychological.

It is furnished by the material organ of the mind. It was the first to suggest the argument I have attempted here, and to me it seems still at once the most richly suggestive and the most conclusive of any I can present. Let us begin with the lowest discovered form of animate existence, the moner. This is a microscopic speck of protoplasm, or jelly-like albumen, apparently structureless and inorganic. Yet the principle of life is in it, for it can assimilate food and propagate its

* From a photograph furnished by Hugh Craig, Esq., of Oakland, who was with the English army in one of their later wars with the Maoris, and who sends me the following note with the picture :

"Tamiti Waka Nene, an aboriginal New Zealand Chief, or Rangatira Maori, of the Ngapuhi tribe in the North Island of New Zealand, who befriended the European settlers in the Maori war of 1840-41 when Honi Heke, another aboriginal, attempted to drive the settlers from Kororareka. The English Government, in grateful remembrance of the services of the old hero, allowed him an annual honorarium from that date until his death."

The Maoris were probably the highest type of people on the earth, who ranked as savages when the English took possession of New Zealand. Their superiority finds clear expression in their features.

kind. It is all mouth, for it absorbs its nutriment indifferently from every side. The whole thing, though undoubtedly a completely developed organism, appears to be but a germinal vesicle, not distinguishable from the egg of higher forms of life. The first process of differentiation, or that activity which makes one part distinguishable from another in structure and function, shows itself under the microscope in the formation of an interior nucleus or germ-spot, and within this again of a nucleolus. At this stage the animal is called the *amœba*. It multiplies, like the moner, by fission, or self-division, forming, as it grows, another nucleus and nucleolus, and then separating. The new individual, after this separation, is an adult, a full-grown animal, sets up an independent business, and grows and divides in the same manner to produce others of its kind. But in some cases the two parts, instead of separating, cling together. The one becomes two, the two become four, the four eight, the eight sixteen, and so on, until the growing union becomes a countless mass of cells, each with its germ-spot and nucleolus, each undistinguishable in appearance and function from any of the others. The whole seem but a structureless drop of jelly. It is now called the *synamœba*, or *amœba* community, and sometimes the *morula*, from its resemblance in form to a mulberry or blackberry. Here, again, nature stops with some examples, and development goes no higher. Another form of life is complete. But in another line of evolution, differing for reasons which no science can yet

penetrate, an indentation appears on one side of the globular mass of cells. The creature assumes the form of an open sack. Nature, refusing longer to eat through the pores of the skin, or absorb her nourishment from all sides alike, is forming a mouth. In the peculiar internal structure of this sack, she is indicating her intention, also, to match that mouth with a stomach. Hence this animal is named the gastrula.

I do not propose to trace the steps of evolution further, so far as the whole animal form is concerned. At about this stage, we reach the fact essential to my present purpose. Under a powerful microscope, the creature of this grade reveals certain fine whitish filaments, or threads, running through the albuminous substance of its body. They lie, for the most part, near the surface, with some degree of order, and are most numerous at the points of the animal's greatest activity. At first discovery, biologists were puzzled what to make of these ; but upon tracing their development in higher forms, it became evident that they were the nervous system—hints toward a brain, although here scattered all over the body. In more advanced species, small knots showed themselves forming along these lines, as if nature had here and there tied the threads. Tracing these in still higher species, observers satisfied themselves that they are no other than *ganglia*, or nerve centers. They are the reservoirs where nature stores up a reserve of nervous force for the hour of action. As the grade of life rose, these grew larger, and also more

numerous toward one extreme of the body. The white threads also seemed to gather toward a median line, running lengthwise along the upper side of the animal, where the notochord, or rudimentary back-bone, was to appear in

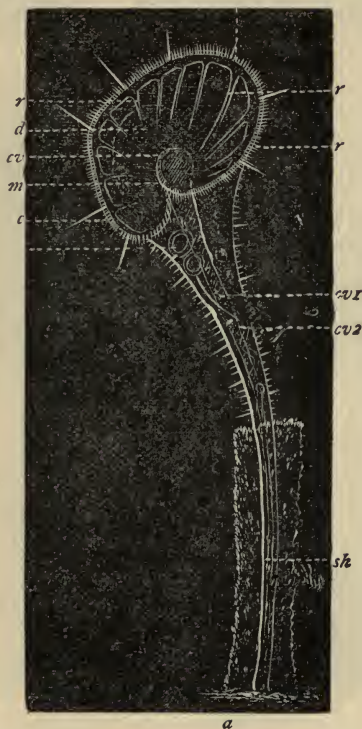


Fig. 10. STENTOR POLYMORPHUS. Magnified 130 Diameters,
(*Trumpet Animalcule.*)

a, posterior; *sh*, sheath into which the animal withdraws when disturbed; *d*, disk, or trumpet expansion; *c*, ciliated border; *b*, larger rigid cilia; *m*, mouth; *r, r, r*, radiating filaments, supposed to be the nervous system; *cv*, contractile vesicle and its prolongation, *cv1*, *cv2*, the point of greatest activity closely connected with the nerves, (From Prof. Henry J. Clark).



Fig. 11. IDEAL PROTOZOAN.
Longitudinal View

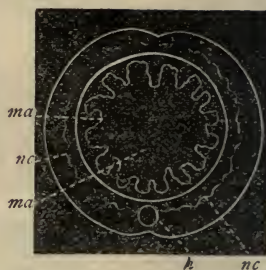


Fig. 12. Foreshortened View
of Same.

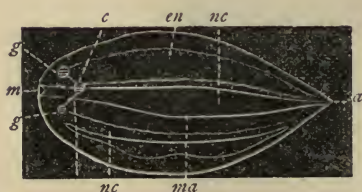


Fig. 13. IDEAL ZOOPHYTE. Long. view.

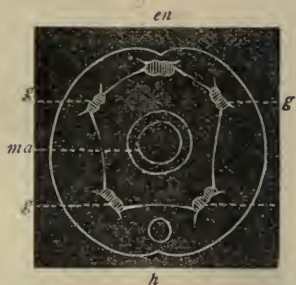


Fig. 14. For. view of same.



Fig. 15. IDEAL MOLLUSCAN. Long. view.

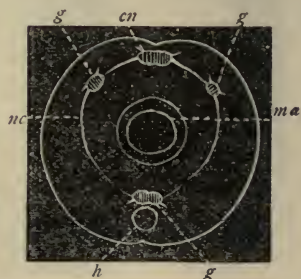


Fig. 16. For. view of same.

m, mouth; *a*, posterior; *ma*, digestive cavity; *h*, heart; *nc*, nerve cells or threads; *g, g*, ganglia or nerve centers; *c*, nerve collar, or ring uniting the ganglia on each side of the heart and the central ganglion at the head of the main nerve trunk, or median line that ultimately develops into the spinal cord; *en*; *ch*, position of internal skeleton in the vertebrate. The corresponding parts are lettered alike in all the figures. For greater simplicity I have not followed exactly the lettering of the author.



Fig. 17. IDEAL ARTICULATE. Long. view.

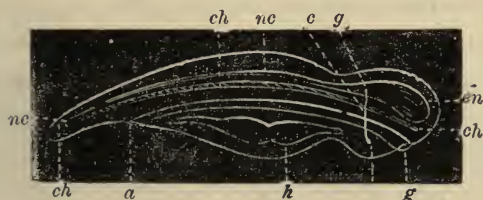


Fig. 19. IDEAL VERTEBRATE. Long. view.

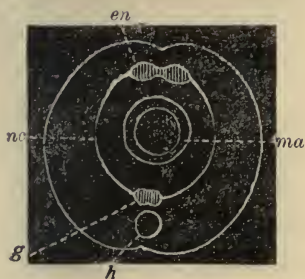


Fig. 18. For. view of Fig. 17.

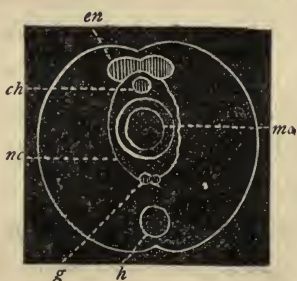


Fig. 20. For. view of Fig. 19.

The annexed ideal figures are taken from *Mind in Nature*, pp. 122-3, an able scientific work by the late Prof. Henry James Clark, of Cambridge. The author was a patient, original observer of microscopic forms of life. These figures may not be the best representation that can be constructed of the early progressive development of the nervous system. Later studies make it probable that the leading types of animal structure, they are intended to set before us, are not in a direct line of evolution; the lower may even be degraded forms from some superior stock. But they do undoubtedly represent rising grades of life, and are the clearest compact illustration of the general line of thought in the text that has fallen under my notice.

more advanced offspring. In further progress, these massed themselves in the central nerve-cord, or medullary tube. Then the forward end of this cord enlarged itself into one grand ganglion, or nerve-center, from which went forth the power to control the whole organism. Nature had come to a head. Creative evolution had formed a brain. The first product of the kind was not Websterian, by any means, but it contained the promise, if not the potency, of the noble organ of the human mind. Cephalization only needs to complete what it has begun. We are familiar with animals, as the oyster, the sea-nettle or Portuguese man-of-war, and other jelly-like creatures, in which no brain proper exists. They are called acephala, or headless, from this fact. But we discover in every specimen of completely developed fish or reptile, proof of a higher organization in the fact that it has a true brain.

The first single enlargement of the anterior end of the spinal-cord is followed by four similar growths or sections (brain ventricles) which appear as if this part of the cord had been constricted by threads tied around it at not quite regular intervals. These, at a more developed stage, become what are known as fore-brain, twixt-brain, mid-brain, hind-brain, and after-brain. The hind-brain develops into the cerebellum, and the fore-brain into the cerebrum. The vast enlargement of the latter quite overgrows and covers up the other sections in man, and gives that prominence to the human forehead which has been already noticed. Without following the process of ceph-

alization step by step, it will suffice to say that, as you ascend along the scale of life, with only a few seeming exceptions, you find the brain growing larger in proportion to the whole body, just in the degree that the species rises in grade of organization. This is the general law. The size of the brain, as compared with the body, quality, or complexity and fineness of organization, being also considered, marks the rank of the animal among the orders of life. In man it is absolutely larger than in any other animal, if you except the whale and the elephant. In proportion to the body, it is many times larger in man than in these. Bring the ape into the comparison, and the lowest man, of normal condition, has a brain proportionally at least a third larger than that of the highest anthropoid. But the crowning fact to be noticed in this line of evolution is the following: *The average human brain is as large as it can be, relatively to the muscular and vital systems, to give the highest nervous force and mental power.* Increase its proportional size, and you weaken, instead of strengthening the organ of mind. You unsettle the balance of the nervous and vital systems. The action of the engine will be too violent for the frame. The average brain in man is as large as it ought to be for its highest functions. Here, then, we once more touch the limit of possible physical progress.

Of course, the reference here is to the *average* human brain. You will meet with individuals enough in whom the larger growth of this organ would not endanger the

physical equilibrium. Nor is it claimed that the average brain always, or even in the majority, attains the size or power which a vigorous use and culture might give. *Its organic or constitutional relation to the body* is the point here in view. On the other hand, examples have doubtless fallen under the observation of us all, in which the brain was too large for the body. Its excessive activity exhausted the sources of its own supplies. The result was a deficiency instead of an increase of nervous force and mental power. This fact also goes to confirm my main proposition.

We have now seen nature struggling through all the long ages of evolution to produce the best possible organ for the mind and spirit of man. This was the grand aim and goal of her creative work. She rose toward her object in every higher form of animal life, by giving it a larger brain in proportion to its body than to preceding forms, and, with that brain, greater intelligence and nervous power. To man, at last, she has given as large a brain as the finest physical organization can bear. She has reached the climax of her endeavors. Her material work can rise to no higher product. All through the organization she has created are scattered the witnesses that this is her goal. We may look for the birth of no child that will inaugurate a higher type of physical life.

The imagination may, no doubt, indulge in conceits of improvement on the finished work of the Creator. Said a Doctor of Divinity, on hearing the theme of this lecture:

"Oh, no! Evolution is not yet at the highest; it can give the body of man wings!" Enough to reply that the wings of man are in his Imperial brain. Better there than a monstrous attachment pinned to his shoulders. As his inventive brain has already given him power to outrun the fleetest animal on land, so it may yet enable him to pass the bird of swiftest wing in the air. Wood, and metal, and air, and water, and fire, are all wings for that wonderful brain, and are made to serve him as if they were vital members of his body. That body, I must believe, is in type the ideal of the Creator realized; and as the work of art expresses the artist, may we not say that the perfect human form is, in some profound sense, the highest material manifestation of God? The perfect man, when he appears, needs no higher organism for his activities.

The organ of the soul now complete, a new course of evolution begins—mental, moral, and spiritual. This must be traced in the history of the human mind. The various races of men must be compared. The psychological phenomena of their development and decay (in those that have decayed), their intellectual characteristics, their moral life, their religious conceptions and worship, must be set side by side. The race vitality and power of progress and self-perpetuation in each must be observed. The highest point in the various lines of progress which each has been able to touch must be marked. Where the elements of human excellence are combined in the nearest

approach to a living and realized perfection, must, if possible be determined. It is the claim of Christianity that its founder was *the Perfect Man*. If this is a fact, it ought to find support and confirmation in the history of this higher evolution, viewed in the light of those intuitions of human perfection given to the clearest moral and spiritual development. The psychological phenomena of evolution must have a bearing on this claim.

The ancient seas and lands were thronged with low forms of life that ran their course and disappeared. The early mind of man was filled with equally rude conceptions of God and duty, which had their day, and gave place to higher thoughts and feelings. Along the line of physical evolution we see various races of creatures branch off, grow vigorously, attain a predominance over all other forms for a time, then decline, or remain stationary, till some higher branch outgrows and overshadows them. Their vitality can carry them no higher. In many cases they die and drop off altogether from the tree of physical evolution. So, along the course of human history, we see races of men develop their respective civilizations to a certain height of knowledge, morality and religion, and then stop as under an arrested vitality. There is not only no life in them that can go on upward, but none that can preserve them from decay or decline. Many have died and dropped away from the tree of human life. Again, through all the ages of physical evolution ran one line of life whose progress was ever onward and upward. It did

not pause till the perfect physical man stood on the earth, the epitome and crown of all that went before. Can there not be traced, running through the history of the moral and spiritual evolution of man, one line of progress that ever moved onward and rose higher, until it touched the nearest approximation of human perfection that has ever appeared on earth, in Jesus of Nazareth? If this can be made to appear, as I firmly believe it can, then will the religion that Jesus really taught, find a scientific basis as impregnable as the truth of evolution itself. And when his church shall cease to substitute belief in certain things about him for the simple faith in God, personal righteousness and good-will to men, which were the substance of his doctrine; and when his followers, instead of contenting themselves with that belief, shall heartily accept the practical ideal they find in him, and make it the stimulus of their aspirations, the aim and endeavor of their lives, we may hope, under that law of evolution which accelerates progress with every higher attainment, that the earth will soon clothe itself in a new moral beauty, and humanity will become in very deed *the image and glory of God*.

Appendix A.

Is the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus a Fundamental Article of the Christian Faith?

If it is so we ought to know it. If Christianity is to stand or fall with this belief, the evidence of its truth ought to leave no room for reasonable doubt. It is incredible that God should have turned aside from the order of nature to do so wonderful a thing, and then should have left the testimony for the fact so confused or defective that honest inquirers in after ages would be at a loss to make up their minds upon it. Outside the four Gospels the resurrection of the body is not clearly asserted in the New Testament. The resurrection is everywhere, but spiritual. Paul declares for a spiritual body ; but all he says on the subject, taken together, seems to discredit, rather than favor the idea of a physical resurrection. Put the four Evangelists, therefore, on the stand. Cross-question them fairly. Sift the testimony given under their names. See whether there is that substantial agreement and air of truthfulness that leaves no ground of reasonable doubt in the mind of an impartial judge.

Turn to the last chapters of Matthew (xxviii), Mark (xvi), Luke (xxiv), and John (xx*), and we have the whole testimony before us. A careful comparison of these discovers substantial agreement in the following particulars :

* The twenty-first chapter of John is not reliable, as it is (in the words of Olshausen) "beyond question a later addition to the completed work."

1. The persons first at the sepulchre—the women of Galilee.
2. The time of their coming—early morning.
3. Their object—to embalm the body.
4. The sealed stone rolled from the door of the sepulchre.
5. The absence of the body of Jesus.
6. An angelic appearance announcing his resurrection.
7. The women (John mentioning only Mary Magdalene), first to report these facts to the Apostles.
8. The appearance of Jesus himself to the disciples, and conversing with them on different occasions.

Mark and John agree that his first appearance after the resurrection was to Mary Magdalene. Matthew says it was to the women ; Luke is silent on this point. Luke and John agree that Peter ran to the sepulchre, after hearing the report of the women. John adds that “the disciple whom Jesus loved” was with Peter, outran him, and was before him at the sepulchre. Matthew and Mark are silent here. Matthew and Mark say the angel directed the women to tell the disciples that Jesus would meet them in Galilee. Matthew states that Jesus also gave them the same message. Luke and John are silent upon this commission to the women, but both report that Jesus himself met the disciples the same evening in Jerusalem. Matthew says nothing of this meeting in Jerusalem, but reports a meeting in Galilee. Mark mentions a meeting, but does not name the place. Matthew and Mark speak of but one angel at the tomb ; Luke and John of two. The first three Evangelists place the angelic appearance at the first approach of the women to the sepulchre. John has it that the first appearance of the angels, and also of Jesus, was to Mary *after* the disciples had

examined the sepulchre and gone away home. Luke and John state that Jesus challenged his disciples to examine his hands and feet, and called for food, and ate before them, in proof that it was his real body ("flesh and bones") that was risen. Matthew and Mark are silent respecting these facts. Luke and John assert the sudden appearance of Jesus among the disciples in a closed room, as if he were a *bodiless* spirit, unconscious of impediment in doors and walls. Luke also narrates how he walked and conversed with two of their number without being recognized, and then suddenly *vanished* out of their sight. Matthew naively confesses that when the disciples met Jesus, according to his appointment, in Galilee, and "worshipped him," "some doubted," showing that after all his striking appearances at Jerusalem, some of the immediate and friendly witnesses were not convinced. Finally, Luke represents the ascension into heaven as taking place visibly before the eyes of the disciples, and even specifies the place. Matthew and John say nothing of this event. Mark (if we are to accept the last twelve verses of his Gospel as genuine, notwithstanding their absence from the oldest manuscripts), contents himself with saying, "So, then, after the Lord had spoken to them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God."

Now, suppose a court of inquiry into this case—judges without bias—this testimony heard for the first time. Let the previous accounts of the crucifixion be added. Also let the subsequent conduct of the witnesses be submitted for full consideration—the sudden return of confidence to these simple-minded disciples, stricken with despair at the execution of the one whom they had trusted

to be their deliverer and king, and their life-long devotion, many of them even in the martyr's death, to bearing witness to him as risen from the dead to be the Savior of the world. Reinforce the evidence by whatever support is fairly due from the effect of their testimony upon their own time, and its later influence in history. The court is to decide whether we must conclude from this combined evidence that the body of Jesus was raised from the dead.

First, the narratives of the crucifixion are taken up. It strikes the judges as singular that one in the vigor of young and healthy manhood should have died so soon after he was nailed to the cross, exciting the wonder of Pilate, who "marveled if he were already dead" (Mark xv, 44); and then that it should be explicitly stated that the legs of the two thieves who were crucified with him were broken to assure their death, but that "not a bone of him was broken;" and his body, without certain evidence of a mortal wound in it, was delivered to his friends, taken down from the cross, and laid in one of their private sepulchres. On the other hand, the judges reflect that the Roman soldier, as an executioner, was no sentimentalist, and made no half-way work of it, especially as his own life was the forfeit if his prisoner escaped. It was not likely that the spear thrust in the side would stop short of a vital point—the force of this reason being somewhat weakened, however, by the admission of one of the witnesses that the soldiers, for "large money," took this very risk by falsely reporting against themselves a capital delinquency—sleeping on watch at the sepulchre. So far the case looks dubious.

Next, the court turns to the direct testimony. Here they note the points of agreement above stated, and then

take under review the apparent discrepancies and singular omissions of some of the narrators—two angels named by some, only one by others ; angels sent to announce his resurrection, then Jesus immediately appearing to announce himself (one or the other an apparently superfluous miracle) ; his first appearance to Mary according to one, to “the women,” according to three ; *after* the disciples had found the tomb empty and had departed, according to one, *before*, according to three ; angels and Jesus sending word to his disciples to meet him in Galilee, then Jesus himself meeting them the same evening in Jerusalem ; two of the witnesses omitting to mention this meeting ; two making no record of the amazing act of his eating and drinking before the disciples ; one acknowledging that there was doubt among the disciples themselves after all these proofs had been witnessed at Jerusalem ; only one intimating that he ever returned to Jerusalem after going into Galilee ; only this one relating the astonishing fact of his leading his disciples out as far as Bethany, near the Holy City, and there being lifted up from the earth before their eyes, and disappearing in the clouds of heaven ; the others strangely omitting to mention this final wonder, and leaving the impression that his last appearance was in Galilee.

The court discovers, upon further investigation, that several years almost certainly elapsed after the date of these events before they were committed to writing ; that in the interval they were probably in the form of oral traditions, passing from mouth to mouth ; that the accounts of them do not appear in history, in their present shape, until three or four generations had passed away ; that there was abundant opportunity, and no lack of dis-

position, to introduce a marvelous and legendary element into them; that considerable interpolations and additions to the original narratives are admitted by all competent scholars; and hence that it would have been nothing new had simple facts grown into startling rumors, and these, again, into stupendous miracles. They can not help asking, also, if the body of Jesus was reanimated, and moved among men, impressing the physical senses, *after* his burial, why were none but his friends permitted the sight?

They next come to the subsequent conduct of the witnesses. Here the evidence is irresistible that something occurred soon after the crucifixion that strangely revived the courage of the desponding friends of Jesus, and inspired in them the life-long conviction that their beloved Master was alive again. Men do not suffer the loss of all things, and cheerfully meet death itself for what they know to be a lie. Was it the body, startling the senses? Was it the Spirit, revealed to an opened spiritual vision, as a certain weird peculiarity of impression on the disciples, discernible in the narrative, would suggest? Or was it the illusion of excited imaginations, reported as fact, and gaining currency at the time, and large additions in after years? The history of human experience allows a wide margin of alternative supposition here. The natural body is not the one to which the mind feels driven.

Finally, the court considers the impression these witnesses made on their own time and on after ages. Was the fact of the physical resurrection an essential element in the power of their testimony of Jesus? Whatever they may have thought of his body, they believed that he was alive again. Of this there can be no doubt. They believed that he lived as the head of a universal

spiritual kingdom. This conviction was a flame of zeal in them. It gave a burning earnestness to their message. Then the universal mind of their age stood in an attitude of peculiar preparation to hear what they had to say on the resurrection or a life to come—the Jews divided into two parties, the one affirming, the other denying the doctrine, raising a blinding dust of controversy between them; the Romans who thought at all of such matters, nearly all Epicureans or Stoics; the former with their maxim of good cheer, “Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die, and that is the last of us;” the latter gravely shaking their heads and saying, “We know nothing of the morrow; the wise man will not trouble himself about that which he can not know.” Imagine a preacher of the resurrection as a demonstrated fact, aflame with zeal, coming into a community whose minds are in this position. His words are upon the burning question of the time. Men are inclined to believe with him. They love the hope of another life. He easily gains attention. And then if he is attended with the reputation of some mysterious power over the forces of nature, such as has almost invariably been credited to the founders of new religions, he can not fail to soon have a multitude with him. The judges note further the purity and elevation of the doctrine of life these witnesses bore with them, its intrinsic truth, its adaptation to man’s moral and religious nature, its power to kindle noble aspirations, strengthen the weak and comfort the sorrowing. They can not believe that the fate of such truth depends upon the question as to what became of the body of the great Teacher who first promulgated it. Its inherent quality accounts for its power in history, not an astounding miracle connected with its revelation.

But the advocates of the affirmative urge that a special divine influence inspired the utterance of the testimony, and preserved its record from all admixture of error. This the court sets aside as mere assumption. The facts in the case forbid its admission. The evidence must stand on its own self-consistency and intrinsic reasonableness. It must submit to the scales which decide the value of all historic testimony. So weighed, the court could hardly fail of unanimity in the decision "*not proven.*" And if appeal be taken from this judgment, it can hardly be denied that the competent scholarship and profoundest piety of Christendom show themselves increasingly disposed to affirm it.

What is the spiritual value of this article of belief? The resurrection it affirms is like no other. Jesus saw no corruption. Our bodies must return to dust. Their literal resurrection is an almost abandoned superstition, even in the church. Who now bases his hope of immortality on the resurrection of the body of Jesus? How few ever connect the two in their thoughts. Who that believes in the life to come at all would doubt that Jesus still lives, and that we shall all live on after our bodies crumble, if it could be *demonstrated* to-day that his body was never requickenened? That the belief is not vital to the spiritual life is demonstrated. Many an intelligent and earnest Christian does not believe it. The insistence that piety can not thrive without it springs from that gross way of thinking, which imagines that the divine life in the soul can not be properly nurtured without dazing the senses with wonders.

It is deprecatingly objected that if we pluck Christianity from the soil of historic fact from which it sprung, it

will wither and die. That is true. The Christian evolutionist readily assents. But what is fact; what fiction and legend? We must discriminate. Then, further, in the history established beyond reasonable question, we must distinguish, as we easily may, the facts *essential* to the life of Christianity from the merely *incidental*. That Jesus lived; that he led a pure and beneficent life, gave forth truth and conceptions of duty and character that compelled assent by their own divine light; that he died a martyr death, sealing his fidelity to the truth and his love to men with his blood—these are essential. Truth throbs with life and power in them. These things are what Jesus himself did. What was done *to* him—to his body after he was dead—that is quite another matter. His truth can not get its life from that.

Let no one insist that others deny the bodily resurrection of Jesus. That is not the point here. The dogmatism of denial is as bad as the dogmatism of assertion. If any find reason and comfort in believing it, let them believe it. The point here is that its believers shall not insist that others believe and affirm it, on peril of being unchristianized. I protest against committing the credit and very life of Christianity to fact or theory resting upon evidence which is not, and can not be made, conclusive—a folly of which its friends have been too often guilty. Many a candid skeptic would willingly accept the physical resurrection, but can not see the proof to be satisfactory. Since experience in the hearts of many devoted Christians demonstrates it to be non-essential, let it be placed among the non-essentials; and I am persuaded that instead of losing a vital aid to faith, it will be found that an impediment to the progress and spiritual life of Christianity has been removed.

Appendix B.—Cavour's Prophecy.

Can Christianity become the Universal Religion?

The prophecy of Count Cavour, the free thinking Italian statesman, strikingly expresses a vague anticipation in many thoughtful minds, who long for some power to give us a purer world. He was dying, and well knew that he had but few days to live. This prediction was uttered in his last conversation with Col. de la Motte Baudin, his biographer, who gives it as follows:

Said Col. Baudin: If you knew how your country will miss you, you could hardly be so resigned to your fate. Tell me, is Hamlet's alternative really a matter of indifference to you?

Cavour replied: Italy has passed the dangerous ford, and I dare say will be able to muddle along on terra-firma without me. But as for myself, speaking from a spectator's, rather than an actor's standpoint, I do not deny that I regret my exit from the play-house. I have witnessed some pretty lively performances in my time; but I shall miss the grand sensation piece. Before the curtain of the century drops, we shall have a new religion.

At the rate our English-speaking fellow creatures are manufacturing that article, we shall have a pretty good stock on hand by that time, suggested his friend.

No, no, protested the Count; I do not mean a new hypocrisy; I mean a new religion.

Don't you think that the Protestants are in earnest ?

Yes, in their protest against Catholicism; so much, indeed, that they have protested it out of the better portion of the world. But what they have substituted for it is purely negative; born of schism, and prolific of new schism; skepticism the very essence and soul of it.

But will not that skepticism prevent the growth of what you call a new religion?

Indeed not. Rotten trees make excellent manure for new trees, you know: our old creed has become a heap of vegetable mold—the very soil for a new creed to germinate in. On naked rationalism no such plant can grow; but the world is as far from being rational as from being—

Being what ?

Trinitarian, if I must speak it out—of course I mean the living portion of the world, not the big petrified trees in Asia.

But among our own variety of trees there are some pretty good sized ones.

Yes, in circumference; but that is no criterion for their staying power; a hollow oak can often boast of an imposing girth. Of course the collapse of the old shell will not come off without a crash, both audible and sensible to the ends of the world. It will be catastrophic, spectacular, and exciting—worth while seeing in short; and that's what makes me loth to leave. It's hard to leave on the very eve of a phenomenon that occurs only once in two thousand years or so.

And so you think a few more years would have been sufficient to —

To witness it ? Yes, sir. The old shell is very hollow.

But infidels have battered it in vain ever so long.

For good reasons. An old creed can never be superseded by infidelity, which means indifference upon the whole, but by a new creed.

It can; but will it? And who knows when?

During the next thirty or forty years. The decay of an old faith always coincides with the advent of a new one.

What makes you think so?

The history of religions.

Here the subject was dropped, and was never resumed. What the statesman-prophet had in mind beyond some great impending change in religious ideas, we can only conjecture. But the following conversation, to which this prophecy gave rise, may be worth reporting. It took place between one who calls himself a Rational Christian and a High Churchman, and fitly represents the conflicting thoughts that would be in many minds at the suggestion of this subject.

Churchman.—A new religion! What would be necessary in the case to win faith and give the new religion power?

Rationalist.—To speak the truth of God and man, and all human duty, more clearly than it has ever been spoken, if that be possible.

C.—Truth alone would not do. It must be backed by authority; and the authority must bear the seal of miracles. No religion could make way in the world without the sanction of miracles. Without them who would know whether he was to accept or reject?

R.—Who would know any better with them? Sup-

pose miracles in any number, and ever so startling—the sky filled with unwonted illuminations, and choirs of singing angels every night, and the world set agape by wonders of healing, and even resurrections from the dead every day—what then? The senses are smitten with strange phenomena! That is about all. The *truth* is not revealed in such phenomena—cannot be. Look upon them forever, and you would know no more of what essential spiritual truth is—truth of human duty and love—or of what the spiritual world is, than if you had been dreaming. They are of the senses, not of the spirit. They belong wholly to the sense sphere of experience, and cannot lift one a line above that sphere. The attempt to reveal spiritual truth through them would be like singing songs to the deaf or painting brilliant colors for the blind. The medium used does not touch the right sense.

C.—But a prophet might surely come, certified of heaven by these wonders, which no man can do, and speak to us with a tongue of flame that would compel us to confess, “Never man spake like this man?”

R.—Very well. But could the prophet’s truth be more than truth? Miracles might attract a brief attention to his words that would not otherwise be accorded; but it would be at the imminent danger (as seems to have been the case with Jesus) that his miracles would gain the chief attention, and his truth would get the go-by. As miracles have no power to reveal truth, or make truth more true, so they have none to make men love the truth. That must, at last, be received and loved and *done*, if at all, for what it is, and not for its incidents. It must be seen by the soul, not by the eye of sense. It must be seen

by its own light, not by some poor, smoking torch of miracle or material manifestation, as if that were a better light to make it clear. The sun does not need a candle, or even a lightning-flash, to make it visible.

C.—But if some one should come from the spirit-world and tell us from experience of its life and conditions, would we not have a reliable revelation?

R.—How could you know that the words of such a ghost were true?

C.—Why, miracles might surely attest them from God.

R.—But suppose they should be satanic miracles, as the Bible itself suggests they might be, and your ghost only an agent of Satan?

C.—Oh, the quality of the message would settle that. Satan would not work a miracle in support of divine truth. He would be undermining his own power; divided against himself, pulling down his own house. He is too sharp for that.

R.—The quality of the message! So, then, after all it is the truth that approves the miracle, and not the miracle the truth; and you must still fall back on your reason to determine whether the miracle is in the interest of truth or of devilry?—that “poor human reason,” against trusting in which you are so often warned! Why not, then, let the truth certificate the messenger and itself without the miracle, and relieve it from the burden of carrying the miracle also? Why not receive the truth, the only valuable thing in the case, for its own sake, and let the poor miracle go its way?

C.—But is not Christianity founded on miracles? Did not Jesus work miracles in attestation of his divine authority to speak as the Word of God?

R.—Suppose he did. He did not seem to make much of his miracles as a support of his truth; he charged it as a reproach and a wickedness on his hearers that they would not believe without them. But grant, for the time, that he wrought them with the intent assumed, *we* cannot see his miracles; we cannot talk with those who witnessed them. In the present state of the evidence, we cannot put the truth of the reports of them beyond all doubt; they are not available to us. Do we need them? Do the words reported to us as the sayings of Jesus need them? Could they add one grain to the evidence of the truth of those words? Do not his teachings shine with their own light? Penetrate their simple substance, strip them of all the foreign additions and false assumptions by which they have been obscured, set them clear of the poor substitutes of ritual and dogma which men have put in their place, *see just what the religion they embody is*, and then say if you can conceive the possibility that an angel from heaven, with ten thousand new miracles, could bring us truths more certainly true or more grandly comprehensive of the whole range of human duty and religious faith? Let us stop here and see if we can grasp something of their breadth and completeness. Look at his teachings in the threefold aspect which sweeps the whole arc of human life and experience—man's relation and duty to God, to his fellow-men, and to himself.

First, God and man. God is a Spirit, to be worshiped in spirit and in truth—under no limits of time or place; not on the mountain of Samaria, nor at Jerusalem; no temple needed, no altar, no priest, no sacrifice, no rite or ceremony. The spirit of worship finds God at once and everywhere—on holy day or holiday, in joy or in grief,

at home or abroad, in temple or market, in society or in solitude. The conditions are all present; let the worship be rendered. God the Spirit, and man the worshiper in spirit, are related as father and child. This is the best human expression of what they are to each other. Man, the child, owes love, trust, and obedience; God, the father, responds with cherishing influence, tenderness, helpfulness, parental love. And when the spirit of man rises to its full privilege of love and trust, God the Spirit dwelleth in him and he in God, blending the life of the two into a unity in which the soul can truthfully say, "I and my Father are one." Notice here the truth and all the conditions of a universal religion. And can you conceive of a more vital, spiritually quickening and life-giving relation of man to God?

Secondly, man to his fellow-men. Good will, universal love—these are the words of Jesus here. Let there be true home-affection for every member of the family of the one Father—sympathy, forbearance, forgiveness, helpfulness, good for evil, love to enemies, mercy that turns away from no depth of unworthiness, sparing no painful self-sacrifice to lift up the fallen and bear them forward on the heart of a Godlike love to a conquering strength over evil, "that ye may be the children of your Father who is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." In short, man is to make his idea of God's love and goodness the ideal of his own conduct and spirit toward his fellow-men. Can heaven send or angel bring a better law or a diviner spirit than this?

Thirdly, man to himself. Let him be inwardly true to his own highest thought. That is all. The anger that

would kill is murder; smother it. The lust that would sin is the sin; quench it. Let the thought be as the deed ought to be. Sternly exact this of your own secret self. The love of God the light by which you see, your own conscience the eye that sees—be the truth and purity and goodness that shape themselves to your inward vision.

Now, take the measure of this threefold law of duty, and then set yourself the task to devise or suggest improvement. Tell us of a better religion, if you can—one that gives a higher idea of God or brings man nearer to Him. Tell us of a law of life that will make a better kind of man. I think you will throw up the task in despair. Criticism searches in vain for a flaw; reason falls baffled in the effort to imagine truth more certainly true, or more complete as a law for conduct and spirit. We laugh at the folly that asks a miracle to certify such truth. It is asking a beggar to go surety for the word of a king; it is asking a candle to light the path of the sun. The truth stands in its own worth; it shames the miracle by its own manifest divinity.

C.—Quite a sermon, with the three traditional heads and application to boot! But have you not lost sight of one fact? The common people must have authority.

R.—Yes, as citizens and for their civil conduct; never for their religion.

C.—How? Would you never have authority enforce religious truth, not even on children?

R.—Never.

C.—Why not?

R.—Because when it does so it puts truth on a level with error.

C.—How so?

R.—Let authority enforce the truth on belief, and men will receive it; but why? Not because it is truth, but because authority commands. Enforce error by authority, and men receive it (as they have done in what innumerable instances!) and why? For the same reason as before: authority compels. The same motive in either case. Truth and falsehood are made equal.

C.—Sharp logic! You are good at making out that white is black.

R.—That is the business of authority when it enforces belief. Enforce a religion, and you make a hypocrisy.

C.—But how would you secure the reception of the perfect truth of Christ?

R.—Teach it.

C.—What would be the penalty of rejecting?

R.—Being without the truth.

C.—Is that all? What would the rejecter care?

R.—All? You remind me of the orthodox hearer who came out from a liberal lecture, exclaiming, "Why, he left us nothing but God to believe in!" Nothing but God! No penalty but to be without the truth! You seem to think that wouldn't be much.

C.—No, I do not mean that. But your fine rationalistic abstractions do not touch the multitude. I do not believe they ever will. You must use some reasons that they can be made to feel.

R.—Take as much pains to teach them what is involved in being without the truth as have been taken to teach them the fictions of theology, and the motives will carry far more weight with them than your fictitious hell, which every school-girl of respectable intelligence has learned to laugh at.

C.—But the popular imagination must be gratified. It must have its *scenery* of the spirit-world. Why should not angels or spirits from God, who can speak from experience, supply the want in the words of a true revelation?

R.—Well, suppose an angel from heaven to come and describe that scenery, and tell the ways of that world, what more would that scenery be in our thought and imagination than another world of matter—matter greatly attenuated, no doubt, sublimated, etherealized, phantomized; yet, after all, only matter with its phenomena appealing to the senses, so only another world of sense? What more could the ways of those inhabitants be to us than another society of earth, moving among themselves, and communing of those interests that make up the life of earth? It is the dream of many that if we could only walk in the visible and audible presence of spirits from the other world every day, we might rejoice in overwhelming revelations of truth. But are we not walking in the visible and audible presence of spirits every day? Is not every one who moves at our side a spirit? And are not some of these even now uttering and writing thoughts and truths of the real spiritual life that are so far beyond our capacity to receive, the powers of comprehension to which we have grown, that we only stare in blank vacancy and wonder what they mean? What better would be a ghost, or an army of ghosts? Why should spirits come to waste on us words of the third heaven when we have not learned the alphabet of the first? Jesus and Paul could not speak their highest truths of the spiritual life because their mole-blind hearers had no vision open to admit their light. Tush! it is time men and women had outgrown such childish conceits. New miracles, ecstatic

prophets, angel visits, or bodiless spirits are not the want; the want is an eye to see, and an ear to hear, and a heart to do the truth we have.

C.—So you do not look, with Cavour, for a new religion?

R.—I cannot conceive that God could send or man receive a better religion than Jesus has given. To accept another would be to take up with something poorer than we already have.

C.—And you deny that Christianity rests on miracles?

R.—Shall our religion rest upon the report of what, in the nature of the case, only a few persons of one generation could have seen? Shall it have its vital evidence in what can be to all other ages only a tradition? Infinite absurdity! No! Real Christianity rests upon its own inherent, self-evident, eternal truthfulness. It appeals to “that light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world”—the universal reason of man. It has its home-witness in every breast. “They that do God’s will know of the doctrine.”

C.—Do you deny that Jesus wrought miracles?

R.—No. Nor do I deny that many who claim to do the like now work miracles. I do not pretend to know all the powers hidden in heaven and earth, nor how or by whom they can be commanded. Are not miracles as numerous, as wonderful, and as well witnessed to-day as ever before? What I do deny is that the universal and perpetual religion of humanity does or can rest on miracles. They are too shallow. They belong, I repeat, to the world of phenomena, to the sphere of the senses. They cannot reveal spiritual truth, nor make it more clear, nor make men love it. When the friends of Chris-

tianity shall see and confess this fact, and call the diverted attention of men from the incidents to the essence of their religion, we may hope that a world, growing in reason, will listen to them.

C.—But absolute truth must have its form of statement, and united worship its ritual, however simple. Has Jesus fixed nothing in this line for his religion.

R.—The form of expression varies indefinitely, the substance remains the same. As to rites of worship, love, the most unchangeable, never wants to go a-courting with set phrase or studied attitudes.

C.—You mean, then, that Christianity is left all outdoors in these respects.

R.—Fresh air is healthful. I have no fear that my religion will take cold from such exposure. Christianity is in far more danger of becoming feeble and sickly from the close atmosphere of the churches and creeds than from dwelling under the open sky of free statement and worship.

C.—Truth its own authority! No established form of worship! Every one free to make his own creed and choose his own ritual! It will not do. Christianity would dissolve and be lost in the immense vacuum of such liberty.

R.—Try it. Leave men free to find what they can, and accept the good they find, in the words and life of Jesus, though without doubt imperfectly reported, and they will discover there what *will be*, simply because it is, the universal and perpetual religion. God and truth will not change.

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